

# POWERS' PICKS \$15

Volume 7 Issue 23

December 20th-27th, 2019

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**Bowl Best Bets 62% Last Year and 56% All-Time!!!**  
**Bowl Forecasts Start on Pg 3, Week 16 NFL Best Bets Pg 5**

### College Bowl Issues Special Note:

Please be aware that there will be no single bowl issue covering all 39 bowl games. This week's issue will only cover the bowl games played from December 20-27 (17 Bowls). The following issue (sent Dec. 25) will cover the bowl games played from December 28-January 1 (17 Bowls). Then the final bowl issue (sent Jan. 1) will cover the bowl games played from January 2-6 (5 bowls).

Welcome to the 5th bowl edition of Powers' Picks. It is certainly a fun time of year to handicap games as you can find legit value in bowl games as long as you know what to look for. Like always, we don't characterize ourselves as strictly technical or situational handicappers. However, some of the things we look for in handicapping the bowl games are motivation factors. Is one team disappointed to be playing in this bowl (example: USC in the Sun Bowl a couple years ago) or is this team really excited to be playing in the bowl.

You also have to factor in the large schedule disparities in the games involving Power 5 conference teams against Group of 5 teams as many times a 6-6 SU Power 5 conference school is far superior to a 9-3/10-2 SU Group of 5 conference school. However, the Power 5 team played a much tougher schedule which skews their season stats, but also gives you value this time of year.

Another thing to factor in when making your bowl selections is the travel distance to the bowl site for each school. While it doesn't necessarily affect the coaches and players so much, it does influence the fans as team's playing closer to home are likely to have the added crowd edge in what is supposed to be a neutral atmosphere.

Finally, you have to pay attention to the coaching situation. Not only are you dealing with interim coaches and a lot of coaching turnover, you also have to analyze how certain coaches do in bowl games. Some coaches are terrific regular season coaches but struggle in the bowl games for whatever reason.

We hope you enjoy this edition of the Powers' Picks and below are some answers to any possible questions you may have regarding this issue as it is different than the regular season editions.

### Bowl FAQ's

Why are you not doing one single bowl issue that covers all 39 games?

First, there are double the amount of bowl games as there were in the 1980's and 1990's and instead of all of them being played in one week (Christmas to New Year's Day), the bowls are spread out over the course of three weeks. Therefore, we're releasing our bowl picks in three separate issues. Those releases will only cover those particular bowl games being played that week (see above). Having later, more up-to-date information should result in more accurate results. We firmly believe you need to have later information in today's day and age!

I am involved in several bowls pools (both straight up and ATS) and the picks are due later this week for all 39 bowl games. What do I do and how do I get all your picks in advance for every bowl game?

Check out page 3 where we have all of our early ATS picks and also straight up bowl confidence contest picks. Three years ago we finished in the Top 1,000 nationwide out of nearly a million entries in ESPN's Bowl Mania contest. Keep in mind, due to late injury news, coaching news and weather forecasts, our early picks on sides and totals could be subject to change, but you will at least get an idea of where we're leaning early in the process.

How do I play your star-rated picks in the bowl issue(s)?

First, we will admit that most of the 1-star plays would not be included in a regular season issue. However, most of you will want action on every single bowl game for a variety of reasons and that is why we put a star-rated pick on every bowl game whether it is the side or the total. If you are someone that only likes to take part in a few games each week, then we would recommend you only play the 3-star and 4-star picks as they are clearly the strongest. If you are someone that likes to play 5-6 games a week, then the 2-stars are certainly worth your while.

Basically a 1-star rating during these bowl issues would be a lean (these have gone 53-43-1 the last 4 years in bowl season so don't just overlook them). A 2-star rating on a bowl is a strong lean while a 3-star or 4-star rating is your typical top star-rated play that you would see weekly in the regular season. Please note that the Powers' Pack selections are in rotation order.

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## 2019 Nationwide Football Newsletter Contest (Regular Season Only)

We are happy to provide you with the records, standings and plays used from the Power Sweep (3★, 4★ & Underdog), Gold Sheet (Key Releases), Power Plays (4.5★ for College 4★ for NFL), Sports Reporter (Best & Super Bets), Winning Points (Best Bets & Preferred), Playbook (3-5★'s), Pointwise (Ratings 1-4), Powers' Picks (1-4★'s) and the Sunday Night Owl Report (1-4★'s).

College					NFL					College/NFL Combined							
Newsletter	W	L	T	%	Net	Newsletter	W	L	T	%	Net	Newsletter	W	L	T	%	Net
Sports Reporter	30	23	1	56.60%	7	Night Owl	11	4	0	73.33%	7	Sports Reporter	46	38	1	54.76%	8
Power Sweep	28	29	0	49.12%	-1	<b>Powers' Picks</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>60.47%</b>	<b>9</b>	Night Owl	32	27	1	54.24%	5
Playbook	19	20	3	48.72%	-1	Power Plays	9	6	0	60.00%	3	Power Plays	24	22	0	52.17%	2
Power Plays	15	16	0	48.39%	-1	Gold Sheet	26	18	1	59.09%	8	<b>Powers' Picks</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>51.35%</b>	<b>3</b>
Night Owl	21	23	1	47.73%	-2	Pointwise	23	21	1	52.27%	2	Gold Sheet	52	51	1	50.49%	1
Winning Points	41	45	0	47.67%	-4	Sports Reporter	16	15	0	51.61%	1	Pointwise	62	67	3	48.06%	-5
Pointwise	39	46	2	45.88%	-7	Winning Points	27	31	2	46.55%	-4	Winning Points	68	76	2	47.22%	-8
<b>Powers' Picks</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>45.59%</b>	<b>-6</b>	Playbook	18	23	1	43.90%	-5	Power Sweep	40	45	2	47.06%	-5
Gold Sheet	26	33	0	44.07%	-7	Power Sweep	12	16	2	42.86%	-4	Playbook	37	43	4	46.25%	-6
<b>Combined</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>47.89%</b>	<b>-22</b>	<b>Combined</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>52.66%</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>Combined</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>423</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>49.70%</b>	<b>-5</b>

CFB & NFL Schedules with Lines wk 17 December 20-27				CFB Bowls Monday, Dec 23rd				Line BP				All Times Eastern									
<b>CFB Bowls Friday, Dec 20th</b>				<b>Line BP</b>				<b>Line BP</b>				All Times Eastern									
201 BUFFALO	2:00 p.m. Bahamas Bowl	ESPN	-6.5	-7					219 MARSHALL	2:30 p.m. Gasparilla Bowl	ESPN	61.5	61								
202 CHARLOTTE			51.5	49					220 UCF			-17.5	-15								
203 KENT ST	7:30 p.m. Frisco Bowl	ESPN2	67.5	64					<b>Tuesday, December 24th</b>				<b>Line BP</b>				All Times Eastern				
204 UTAH ST			-6.5	-4					221 BYU	8:00 p.m. Hawaii Bowl	ESPN	-2	65								
<b>CFB Bowls Saturday, Dec 21st</b>				<b>Line BP</b>				<b>Line BP</b>				All Times Eastern									
207 CENTRAL MICHIGAN	2:00 p.m. New Mexico Bowl	ESPN	41	40					222 HAWAII			64	-1								
208 SAN DIEGO ST			-3.5	-6					<b>Thursday, December 26th</b>				<b>Line BP</b>				All Times Eastern				
209 LIBERTY	2:30 p.m. Cure Bowl	CBS College	58.5	59					223 MIAMI, FL	4:00 p.m. Independence Bowl	ESPN	-6	-5								
210 GEORGIA SOUTHERN			-4	-3					224 LOUISIANA TECH			50	51								
211 SMU	9:30 p.m. Boca Raton Bowl	ABC	-3	-6					225 PITTSBURGH	8:00 p.m. Quick Lane Bowl	ESPN	-11	-10								
212 FLORIDA ATLANTIC			70	68					226 EASTERN MICHIGAN			49	50								
213 FIU	5:30 p.m. Camellia Bowl	ESPN	62.5	-1					<b>Friday, December 27th</b>				<b>Line BP</b>				All Times Eastern				
214 ARKANSAS ST			-2.5	61					227 NORTH CAROLINA	12:00 p.m. Military Bowl	ESPN	-4.5	-7								
215 WASHINGTON	7:30 p.m. Las Vegas Bowl	ABC	-3.5	-5					228 TEMPLE			53	55								
216 BOISE ST			49.5	49					229 MICHIGAN ST	3:20 p.m. Pinstripe Bowl	ESPN	-4.5	-3								
217 UAB	9:00 p.m. New Orleans Bowl	ESPN	48	47					230 WAKE FOREST			49	49								
218 APPALACHIAN ST			-16.5	-15					231 OKLAHOMA ST	6:45 p.m. Texas Bowl	ESPN	54	54								
<b>NFL Sunday, December 21st</b>				<b>Line BP</b>				<b>Line BP</b>				All Times Eastern									
451 L.A. RAMS	8:15 p.m.	NFL Network	45.5	45					232 TEXAS A&M			-7	-6								
452 SAN FRANCISCO			-6.5	-7					233 USC	8:30 p.m. Holiday Bowl	FOX Sports 1	52	54								
453 BUFFALO	4:30 p.m.	NFL Network	37.5	33					234 IOWA			-2	-2								
454 NEW ENGLAND			-6.5	-7					235 WASHINGTON ST	10:15 p.m. Cheez-It Bowl	ESPN	67	69								
455 HOUSTON	1:00 p.m.	NFL Network	-3	-2					236 AIR FORCE			-3	-1								
456 TAMPA BAY			49.5	50					<b>Head Coach vs Head Coach Bowl Records</b>												
<b>NFL Sunday, December 22nd</b>				<b>Line BP</b>				<b>Line BP</b>				All Times Eastern									
457 DETROIT	4:05 p.m.	CBS	38.5	40					<b>First 17 Bowl Games (December 20-27)</b>												
458 DENVER			-7	-8					<b>Coach</b>												
459 OAKLAND	4:05 p.m.	CBS	45	45					<b>SU</b>												
460 L.A. CHARGERS			-7	-9					<b>ATS</b>												
461 JACKSONVILLE	1:00 p.m.	FOX	46.5	46					<b>Fav</b>												
462 ATLANTA			-7	-8					<b>Dog</b>												
463 NEW ORLEANS	1:00 p.m.	FOX	-3	51					Lance Leipold, Buffalo	0-1	0-1	0-1	-								
464 TENNESSEE			50.5	-1					Will Healy, Charlotte	-	-	-	-								
465 N.Y. GIANTS	1:00 p.m.	FOX	42	42					Sean Lewis, Kent State	-	-	-	-								
466 WASHINGTON			-2.5	-2					Gary Andersen, Utah State	1-2	1-2	1-2	-								
467 PITTSBURGH	1:00 p.m.	CBS	-3	-1					Jim McElwain, Central Michigan	2-1	2-1	1-0	1-1								
468 N.Y. JETS			37.5	39					Rocky Long, San Diego St	4-9	4-9	3-5	1-4								
469 CINCINNATI	1:00 p.m.	CBS	47	50					Hugh Freeze, Liberty	3-1	3-1	3-0	1-0								
470 MIAMI			-1	-2					Chad Lunsford, Georgia Southern	1-0	0-1	0-1	-								
471 CAROLINA	1:00 p.m.	FOX	46	45					Sonny Dykes, SMU	1-2	2-1	1-1	1-0								
472 INDIANAPOLIS			-7	-7					Glenn Spencer, Florida Atlantic (interim)	-	-	-	-								
473 BALTIMORE	1:00 p.m.	CBS	-10	-10					Butch Davis, FIU	6-3	7-2	5-0	2-2								
474 CLEVELAND			48.5	50					Blake Anderson, Arkansas State	1-4	1-4	0-2	1-2								
475 DALLAS	4:25 p.m.	FOX	-2.5	-1					Chris Petersen, Washington	6-6	7-5	3-3	4-2								
476 PHILADELPHIA			46.5	47					Bryan Harsini, Boise State	3-1	3-1	1-1	2-0								
477 ARIZONA	4:25 p.m.	FOX	50.5	49					Bill Clark, UAB	1-1	1-1	1-0	0-1								
478 SEATTLE			-9.5	-7					Shawn Clark, Appalachian St	-	-	-	-								
479 KANSAS CITY	8:20 p.m.	NBC	-6	-4					Doc Holliday, Marshall	6-0	6-0	4-0	2-0								
480 CHICAGO			45	44					Josh Heupel, UCF	0-1	0-1	-	0-1								
<b>NFL Monday, December 23rd</b>				<b>Line BP</b>				<b>Line BP</b>				All Times Eastern									
481 GREEN BAY	8:15 p.m.	ESPN	46	46					Kalani Sitake, BYU	2-0	1-1	1-1	-								
482 MINNESOTA			-5	-8					Nick Rolovich, Hawai'i	1-1	1-1	-	1-1								

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## Brad Powers Early ATS Picks on All 39 Bowls

Late injury, suspension, weather and coaching reports could have us leaning with another team especially with the late December/early January bowls.

Bowl Game	Matchup	Early ATS Pick
Bahamas Bowl	Buffalo vs Charlotte	Buffalo (-)
Frisco Bowl	Kent St vs Utah St	Kent St (+)
New Mexico Bowl	Central Michigan vs San Diego St	San Diego St (-)
Cure Bowl	Liberty vs Georgia Southern	Liberty (+)
Boca Raton Bowl	SMU vs Florida Atlantic	SMU (-)
Camellia Bowl	FIU vs Arkansas St	FIU (+)
Las Vegas Bowl	Washington vs Boise St	Washington (-)
New Orleans Bowl	UAB vs Appalachian St	UAB (+)
Gasparilla Bowl	Marshall vs UCF	Marshall (+)
Hawaii Bowl	BYU vs Hawaii	Hawaii (+)
Independence Bowl	Miami, FL vs Louisiana Tech	Louisiana Tech (+)
Quick Lane Bowl	Pittsburgh vs Eastern Michigan	Eastern Michigan (+)
Military Bowl	North Carolina vs Temple	North Carolina (-)
Pinstripe Bowl	Michigan St vs Wake Forest	Wake Forest (+)
Texas Bowl	Oklahoma St vs Texas A&M	Oklahoma St (+)
Holiday Bowl	USC vs Iowa	Iowa (-)
Cheez-It Bowl	Washington St vs Air Force	Washington St (+)
Camping World Bowl	Iowa St vs Notre Dame	Iowa St (+)
Cotton Bowl	Memphis vs Penn St	Penn St (-)
Peach Bowl	Oklahoma vs LSU	Oklahoma (+)
Fiesta Bowl	Clemson vs Ohio St	Ohio St (+)
First Responder Bowl	Western Michigan vs WKU	Western Michigan (+)
Redbox Bowl	Illinois vs California	California (-)
Orange Bowl	Virginia St vs Florida	Florida (-)
Music City Bowl	Mississippi St vs Louisville	Mississippi St (-)
Sun Bowl	Florida St vs Arizona St	Florida St (+)
Liberty Bowl	Kansas St vs Navy	Kansas St (+)
Arizona Bowl	Georgia St vs Wyoming	Wyoming (-)
Alamo Bowl	Texas vs Utah	Texas (+)
Belk Bowl	Kentucky vs Virginia Tech	Virginia Tech (-)
Citrus Bowl	Michigan vs Alabama	Alabama (-)
Outback Bowl	Minnesota vs Auburn	Auburn (-)
Rose Bowl	Wisconsin vs Oregon	Oregon (+)
Sugar Bowl	Baylor vs Georgia	Baylor (+)
Birmingham Bowl	Boston College vs Cincinnati	Cincinnati (-)
Gator Bowl	Tennessee vs Indiana	Tennessee (-)
Potato Bowl	Ohio vs Nevada	Ohio (-)
Armed Forces Bowl	Tulane vs Southern Miss	Tulane (-)
Lending Tree Bowl	Miami, Oh vs UL-Lafayette	Miami, Oh (+)

## Brad Powers Bowl Confidence Contest Picks

3 Years Ago Finished No. 989 (100% percentile) out of nearly a million entries in ESPN's Bowl Mania!!! (41 most confident straight up, 1 least confident)

Bowl Game	Matchup	SU Winner	Pts
Orange Bowl	Virginia vs Florida	Florida	41
Gasparilla Bowl	Marshall vs UCF	UCF	40
New Orleans Bowl	UAB vs Appalachian St	Appalachian St	39
Lending Tree Bowl	Miami, Oh vs UL-Lafayette	UL-Lafayette	38
Peach Bowl	Oklahoma vs LSU	LSU	37
Arizona Bowl	Georgia St vs Wyoming	Wyoming	36
Quick Lane Bowl	Pittsburgh vs Eastern Michigan	Pittsburgh	35
Birmingham Bowl	Boston College vs Cincinnati	Cincinnati	34
Outback Bowl	Minnesota vs Auburn	Auburn	33
Potato Bowl	Ohio vs Nevada	Ohio	32
Citrus Bowl	Michigan vs Alabama	Alabama	31
Armed Forces Bowl	Tulane vs Southern Miss	Tulane	30
Cotton Bowl	Memphis vs Penn St	Penn St	29
Redbox Bowl	Illinois vs California	California	28
Bahamas Bowl	Buffalo vs Charlotte	Buffalo	27
Military Bowl	North Carolina vs Temple	North Carolina	26
Texas Bowl	Oklahoma St vs Texas A&M	Texas A&M	25
Sugar Bowl	Baylor vs Georgia	Georgia	24
New Mexico Bowl	Central Mich vs San Diego St	San Diego St	23
Sun Bowl	Florida St vs Arizona St	Arizona St	22
Las Vegas Bowl	Washington vs Boise St	Washington	21
Boca Raton Bowl	SMU vs Florida Atlantic	SMU	20
Alamo Bowl	Texas vs Utah	Utah	19
Frisco Bowl	Kent St vs Utah St	Utah St	18
Independence Bowl	Miami, FL vs Louisiana Tech	Miami, FL	17
Music City Bowl	Mississippi St vs Louisville	Mississippi St	16
Cure Bowl	Liberty vs Georgia Southern	Ga Southern	15
Pinstripe Bowl	Michigan St vs Wake Forest	Michigan St	14
Belk Bowl	Kentucky vs Virginia Tech	Virginia Tech	13
Camping World Bowl	Iowa St vs Notre Dame	Notre Dame	12
Gator Bowl	Tennessee vs Indiana	Tennessee	11
Fiesta Bowl	Clemson vs Ohio St	Clemson	10
First Responder Bowl	Western Michigan vs WKU	WKU	9
Rose Bowl	Wisconsin vs Oregon	Wisconsin	8
Holiday Bowl	USC vs Iowa	Iowa	7
Liberty Bowl	Kansas St vs Navy	Kansas St	6
Camellia Bowl	FIU vs Arkansas St	FIU	5
National Champ	Clemson vs LSU	Clemson	4
Hawaii Bowl	BYU vs Hawaii	Hawaii	3
Celebration Bowl	NC A&T vs Alcorn St	NC A&T	2
Cheez-It Bowl	Washington St vs Air Force	Air Force	1

Tie-Breaker: Total Points in National Championship Game: 61

4★ = BEST  
3★ = BETTER  
2★ = GOOD  
1★ = FAIR

### THE POWERS' PACK

- 1★ UNDER 51.5 Buffalo/Charlotte (Dec. 20)
- 1★ Kent St (+6.5) over Utah St (Dec. 20)
- 1★ San Diego St (-3.5) over Central Mich (Dec. 21)
- 1★ Liberty (+4) over Georgia Southern (Dec. 21)
- 2★ Smu (-3) over FLORIDA ATLANTIC (Dec. 21)
- 2★ Fiu (+2.5) over Arkansas St (Dec. 21)
- 1★ Washington (-3.5) over Boise St (Dec. 21)
- 1★ Uab (+16.5) over Appalachian St (Dec. 21)
- 2★ Marshall (+17.5) over Central Florida (Dec. 23)
- 1★ HAWAII (+2) over Byu (Dec. 24)
- 1★ Louisiana Tech (+6) over Miami, FL (Dec. 26)
- 1★ Eastern Michigan (+11) over Pittsburgh (Dec. 26)
- 3★ North Carolina (-4.5) over Temple (Dec. 27)
- 1★ Wake Forest (+4.5) over Michigan St (Dec. 27)
- 1★ Oklahoma St (+7) over Texas A&M (Dec. 27)
- 1★ Usc/Iowa OVER 52 (Dec. 27)
- 2★ Washington St/Air Force OVER 67 (Dec. 27)

#### Games in Rotation Order

##### Friday, December 20th

##### Bahamas Bowl in Nassau, Bahamas

1★ UNDER 52. † Buffalo 28 Charlotte 21. Both teams are playing their best ball of the season. After a 2-5 start, Charlotte won their last 5 games of the season to clinch bowl eligibility for the first time in school history. On the other side, Buffalo won 5 of their last 6 games to clinch bowl eligibility for the 3rd straight season. Buffalo did have a pair of 1,000-yard rushers for the first time in school history in Jaret Patterson (1,626) and Kevin Marks (1,008). Since 2005,

#### HOME TEAM IN CAPS

the MAC is just 18-51 SU (-7.9 ppg) and 22-43-4 ATS (-4.8 ppg, 34%). Even though we like the Bulls match-up edges here, we don't like laying points with MAC teams in bowl games. We were all set in taking the OVER here but there are 25-plus MPH winds in the forecast have us calling for the UNDER.

##### Frisco Bowl in Frisco, TX

1★ Kent St (+6). † Utah St 34 Kent St 30. We're not sure how excited Utah St is to be here (11-2 last season) and we've seen that lack of attention to detail possibly show up with a couple of their players getting busted for pot yesterday including QB Jordan Love (just a 17-16 ratio this year). Meanwhile Kent is playing in just their 2nd bowl since 1972 and should be thrilled to be here under 2nd-year coach Sean Lewis. They are led by QB Dustin Crum who had an 18-2 TD-to-INT ratio this year while also rushing for 560 yards. Each of Kent St's last 6 games were decided by one possession and we look for another here.

##### Saturday, December 21st

##### New Mexico Bowl in Albuquerque, NM

1★ San Diego St (-3.5). † San Diego St 23 Central Michigan 17. Central Michigan is one of the most improved teams in the country this year as after going 1-11 last season, they managed 8 wins under first-year coach Jim McElwain. Meanwhile, San Diego St is in their 10th straight bowl game (9 under head coach Rocky Long). Obviously, the Aztecs rely heavily on their defense which is Top 5 in both ypg and ppg allowed. The question is can they get margin with an offense that is averaging just 19 ppg? Totals' players note the UNDER went 11-1 in San Diego St games this season.

##### Cure Bowl in Orlando, FL

1★ Liberty (+4). † Georgia Southern 31 Liberty 28. First bowl game ever for Liberty who should be excited to be here under first-year head coach Hugh Freeze. The Flames got it done via the air thanks to QB Stephen Calvert (26-5 ratio) and WR Antonio Gandy-Golden (1,333 yards). Meanwhile, Georgia Southern gets it done via a ground attack that averaged 262 ypg. Liberty does have extra time to prep for the option here and we think they have the coaching edge.

##### Boca Raton Bowl in Boca Raton, FL

2★ Smu (-3). † Smu 37 FLORIDA ATLANTIC 31. SMU played the much tougher schedule this season (No. 75 vs No. 115 in Sagarin's ratings) and that kind of disparity is something you often don't see in match-ups involving Group of 5 teams. We also think there could be a "substitute teacher" effect with FAU interim coach Glen Spencer who has no shot of the permanent gig (Owls hired Willie Taggart).



**Camellia Bowl in Montgomery, AL**

**2★ Fiu (+2.5).** † **Fiu 31 Arkansas St 30.** Two reasons we like the Golden Panthers here, first our power ratings (see next page) say the wrong team is favored here. Second, we have the coaching edge with FIU head coach Butch Davis 7-2 ATS in bowl games while Arkansas St head coach Blake Anderson is 1-4 ATS. Also note that FIU won last year's bowl game without starting QB James Morgan who should be motivated to play in this year's game.

**Las Vegas Bowl in Whitney, NV**

**1★ Washington (-3.5).** † **Washington 27 Boise St 22.** Obviously, the big story here is the final game for Washington head coach Chris Petersen who plays his former team. The Huskies had a disappointing 2019 season but at times played like a Top 15 team. Their DC Jimmy Lake will be taking over next season. Meanwhile, Boise St managed 12 wins and a Mountain West Championship despite playing 3 different QB's. Washington played the much tougher schedule (No. 42 vs No. 86) and we would have liked this play more if their TE Hunter Bryant and LT Trey Adams didn't decide to skip out on the game.

**New Orleans Bowl in New Orleans, LA**

**1★ Uab (+16.5).** † **Appalachian St 31 Uab 16.** Appalachian St returns to the New Orleans bowl after going 12-1 this season including wins over North Carolina and South Carolina. Head coach Eli Drinkwitz is off to Missouri but Shawn Clark will become the permanent coach here (was OL coach this year and played for App St). On the other side, we expect a bounce-back effort out of UAB after getting demolished in the CUSA Championship game. However, note they did face the 2nd easiest schedule in the country.

**Monday, December 23rd**

**Gasparilla Bowl in Tampa, FL**

**2★ Marshall (+17.5).** † **Ucf 38 Marshall 23.** Obviously, UCF is the far superior team here and statistically speaking, the Knights weren't that far off from the last two editions which went unbeaten in the regular season. However, Marshall head coach Doc Holliday is 6-0 SU (+13 ppg) and 6-0 ATS (+11 ppg) in bowl games. 30 players on Marshall's roster are from the state of Florida so they should be plenty fired up here as a big underdog.

**Tuesday, December 24th**

**Hawai'i Bowl in Honolulu, HI**

**1★ HAWAII (+2).** † **HAWAII 33 BYU 32.** BYU had another "up and down" season under head coach Kalani Sitake as upset wins over Tennessee, USC and Boise St were countered with upset losses to Toledo, South Florida and San Diego St. Meanwhile, Hawai'i clearly over-achieved this season as the Rainbow Warriors have an opportunity at notching a double-digit win season with a win here. We think their passing offense could cause some problems for a BYU defense that hasn't seen many good offenses in the back half of their schedule.

**Thursday, December 26th**

**Independence Bowl in Shreveport, LA**

**1★ Louisiana Tech (+6).** † **Miami, FL 28 Louisiana Tech 23.** Louisiana Tech was sitting on an 8-game winning streak until a 2-game suspension for their QB J'Mar Smith derailed their chances of a CUSA Championship. Meanwhile, Miami has been one of the most inconsistent teams in the entire country this year including 3 outright losses as a 2-TD or more favorite! How motivated will they be for this one? We may have gotten our clues in the form of a pair of DE's and a WR sitting out the game. Meanwhile, LT should be plenty motivated here playing close to home and head coach Skip Holtz is 7-3 SU/ATS in bowl games.

**Quick Lane Bowl in Detroit, MI**

**1★ Eastern Michigan (+11).** † **Pittsburgh 30 Eastern Michigan 20.** Anytime you have a big favorite, you have to question what is the motivation to get margin? We're not sure a Pittsburgh team playing in Detroit will have a ton of motivation here. Meanwhile, EMU should be plenty fired up playing close to home. How much separation can Pitt get with an offense that is only averaging 20 ppg? The Panthers didn't win a single game by more than 10 points all season and that included games against MAC member Ohio and FCS Delaware.

**Friday, December 27th**

**Military Bowl in Annapolis, MD**

**3★ North Carolina (-4.5).** † **North Carolina 31 Temple 24.** The Tar Heels clearly exceeded expectations in the first year under Mack Brown. True frosh QB Sam Howell set an NCAA-record with 35 TD passes for a true freshman and with 15 extra practices should only get better here. Meanwhile, Temple head coach Rod Carey is 0-6 SU (-25 ppg) and 0-6 ATS (-18 ppg) in bowl games. Our power ratings are strong on UNC here (see below) and note coach Brown was 13-8 in bowl games.

**Pinstripe Bowl in Bronx, NY**

**1★ Wake Forest (+4.5).** † **Michigan St 26 Wake Forest 23.** Tough trusting a Michigan St team to get margin when their offense only averaged 22 ppg this season. We also aren't a fan of the overall vibe surrounding this program the last couple of seasons and while Dantonio used to be one of our favorites on these pages, Wake Forest HC Clawson has done the better job the last couple of years including 3 straight bowl wins. Make sure to check on the injury status of Wake QB Jamie Newman although backup Sam Hartman has experience.

**Texas Bowl in Houston, TX**

**1★ Oklahoma St (+7).** † **Texas A&M 30 Oklahoma St 24.** These two former Big 12 rivals haven't met since 2011. Oklahoma St over-achieved this season as they are making their 14th straight bowl appearance. Head coach Mike Gundy is 9-4 SU/8-5 ATS in bowl games. This year's team was led by RB Chuba Hubbard who led the nation in rushing with 1,936 yards (just announced yesterday, he will play in this game). Also note that QB Spencer Sanders could return here. All five of Texas A&M's losses this season came to teams in the Top 10 of our power ratings. However, all 7 of their wins came against teams that finished .500 or below. Obviously, Oklahoma St is in the middle of those two.

**Holiday Bowl in San Diego, CA**

**1★ OVER 52.** † **Iowa 28 Usc 26.** Clearly, Iowa has the coaching edge here with Ferentz (10-6 ATS in bowls) vs USC's Helton (1-3 ATS). Also note that the Pac-12 is just 3-17-1 ATS (-7 ppg) in bowl games the last 3 years. However, we're not fond of backing the Hawkeyes here because we can't get over the fact Iowa hasn't seen this kind of talent and depth at the WR position all year long. Also USC played the tougher schedule and the two teams have similar ypp margins. Therefore, we lean with the OVER here.

**Cheez-It Bowl in Phoenix, AZ**

**2★ OVER 67.** † **Air Force 35 Washington St 34.** Note that Washington St head coach Mike Leach is just 4-10 ATS in bowl games as teams have time to figure out his quirky offense. However, Air Force doesn't have the personnel to replicate Washington St's No. 1 pass offense in practice and neither does Wazu have the personnel to give a good look for Air Force's No. 3 rushing attack. Washington St QB Anthony Gordon led the nation in passing with 5,228 yards. Meanwhile, Air Force won their last 7 games of the regular season to notch their first 10-win season in the regular season since 1998. OVER!

**Week 17 Computer Projected Lines for Every CFB Game**

For the past couple of seasons we have posted computer projected lines at pregame.com. Games where there was of difference of more than 3 points saw our computer lines actually beat the Vegas line at a 224-176-10 (56%) clip the last three years. That's pretty solid and actually better than our own handicapping in some seasons. Last week's plays went 1-0 and now the record for this year is 76-71-2. Keep in mind, these computer lines don't take into consideration off-the-field factors like revenge or flat spots. They are basically a power-rating number difference between the two teams that also takes into consideration the home field advantage.

Of the 4 games where our computer is off more than 3 points compared to the Vegas line (highlighted), our favorite team this week to back would be **North Carolina -4.5**. The Comp column is the computer projected line and the Diff column is the difference between the Vegas line and the Computer line. "+" numbers in the difference column say back the underdog. "-" numbers in the difference column say back the favorite. Let us know if you have questions.

Game	Line	Comp	Diff	Game	Line	Comp	Diff
201 Buffalo				221 BYU			
202 Charlotte	+6.5	+6.0	+0.5	222 Hawaii	+2	+2.2	-0.2
203 Kent St				223 Miami, FL			
204 Utah St	-6	-7.4	-1.4	224 Louisiana Tech	+6	+7.5	-1.5
207 Central Michigan				225 Pittsburgh			
208 San Diego St	-3.5	-4.5	-1.0	226 Eastern Michigan	+11	+13.0	-2.0
209 Liberty				227 North Carolina			
210 Georgia Southern	-5	-4.2	+0.8	228 Temple	+4.5	+7.7	-3.2
211 SMU				229 Michigan St			
212 Florida Atlantic	+3	+1.1	+1.9	230 Wake Forest	+4.5	+1.2	+3.3
213 FIU				231 Oklahoma St			
214 Arkansas St	-2.5	+2.0	+4.5	232 Texas A&M	-7	-6.4	+0.6
215 Washington				233 USC			
216 Boise St	+3.5	+3.6	-0.1	234 Iowa	-2	-3.5	-1.5
217 UAB				235 Washington St			
218 Appalachian St	-16.5	-16.1	+0.4	236 Air Force	-3	+1.9	+4.9
219 Marshall							
220 UCF	-17.5	-16.2	+1.3				

**Top 10 CFB ATS Trends for Week 17**

- Underdogs in bowl games are on a 62-46-6 ATS 57% run the last 3 years.
- Since 1980, the SEC has the best ATS mark in bowl games at 54.7%.
- Since 2005, the MAC is just 18-51 SU (-7.9 ppg) and 22-43-4 ATS (-4.8 ppg, 34%).
- The UNDER went 11-1 in San Diego St games this season. This week's total is 41 vs Central Michigan.
- FIU head coach Butch Davis is 7-2 ATS in bowl games. FIU is +2.5 vs Arkansas St.
- Marshall head coach Doc Holliday is 6-0 SU (+13 ppg) and 6-0 ATS (+11 ppg) in bowl games. Marshall is +17.5 vs UCF.
- Marshall is 12-2 ATS in bowl games all-time.
- Temple head coach Rod Carey is 0-6 SU (-25 ppg) and 0-6 ATS (-18 ppg) in bowl games. Temple is +4.5 vs North Carolina.
- Wake Forest is 8-1-1 ATS in bowl games since 1980. Wake is +4.5 vs Michigan St.
- Pac-12 teams are just 3-17-1 ATS (-7 ppg) in bowl games the last 3 years.

4★ = BEST  
3★ = BETTER  
2★ = GOOD  
1★ = FAIR

## THE POWERS' PACK

**3★ MINNESOTA -5 over Green Bay**  
**2★ TENNESSEE +3 (-120) over New Orleans**  
**2★ Arizona +9.5 over SEATTLE**

Games in Rotation Order

HOME TEAM IN CAPS

Saturday, December 21st

**SAN FRANCISCO 27 L.A. RAMS 20.** The 49ers manhandled the Rams in the first meeting 20-7. After last week's crushing loss to Dallas, L.A. needs two wins and two Minnesota losses to get to the playoffs. Can you say unlikely to happen? (538 gives the Rams a 3% shot) Todd Gurley has yet to top 100 yards in any game this season and the Rams were out-rushed 263-22 at Dallas. Meanwhile, we cashed our top play on these pages fading the 49ers last week although the final was a bit misleading with those two late TD's (still we never trailed ATS wise). SF still controls their destiny in the NFC as a win here and a win in Seattle next week clinches the No. 1 seed for them.

**NEW ENGLAND 20 Buffalo 13.** Buffalo did have 23-11 first down and 375-224 yard edges in the first meeting but a blocked punt helped the Pats to a 16-10 win. Since 2013, the Patriots are 56-7 SU (+13 ppg) and 43-19-1 ATS (+4.8 ppg, 69%) at home. In their last home game, the Pats lost outright for the first time in 22 games. However, Tom Brady does have 5 consecutive games with a QBR of less than 40. Lean UNDER which is 11-3 in Buffalo games this year.

**Houston 26 TAMPA BAY 24.** We keep hearing that Bill O'Brien is such a bad coach but Houston has won 9 or more games in 5 of his 6 seasons and a win here locks up the AFC South for them. On the other side, the Bucs have won 4 straight and are averaging 35 ppg in those games. Winston became the first QB ever in the regular season to top 450 yards in back-to-back games. Tampa Bay does have a bad home field edge as they are 27-45-4 ATS (37.5%) this decade including 0-4-1 ATS (-6.8 ppg) this season. They will most likely be without two of their best WR's in Mike Evans and Chris Godwin. However, that all looks like it is priced into this line.

Sunday, December 22nd

**DENVER 24 Detroit 16.** Both teams were dominated last week and both don't have much to play for in the final two weeks. Last week, Detroit lost their 7th straight home game and now the Lions are just 1-9 SU and 1-8-1 ATS in their last 10 games overall. Still, Matt Patricia was given the vote of confidence that he will be back in 2020. Meanwhile, Denver lost in the snow at Kansas City but have shown a little more fight than the Lions with a 7-3 ATS mark their last 10 games (although first time since 1970-72, they have 3 straight losing seasons). Slight lean on the home favorite.

**L.A. CHARGERS 27 Oakland 18.** How does Oakland pick themselves off the mat after that horrible 4Q vs Jacksonville last week? Considering it was the final home game in Oakland, it had to be one of the worst losses in the history of the franchise. It wasn't much better for the Chargers as they lost to Minnesota 39-10 thanks to 7 TO's (Minnny had 1!) Note in the last 30 years, teams that were -6 in TO's are 1-46 SU (-19.8 ppg) and 4-43 ATS (-18.3 ppg). However, those teams are 22-19-2 ATS (+4.7 ppg) in their next game.

### Updated NFL Records: Straight Up, ATS and Over/Under

Team	Straight-Up			Against The Spread			Over/Under		
	Total	Home	Away	Total	Home	Away	Total	Home	Away
Arizona	4-9-1	2-5-1	2-4-0	8-5-1	4-4-0	4-1-1	8-6-0	5-3-0	3-3-0
Atlanta	5-9-0	2-5-0	3-4-0	6-8-0	3-4-0	3-4-0	10-4-0	2-5-0	4-3-0
Baltimore	12-2-0	6-1-0	6-1-0	8-5-1	3-4-0	5-1-1	8-6-0	3-4-0	5-2-0
Buffalo	10-4-0	4-3-0	6-1-0	9-4-1	3-4-0	6-0-1	3-11-0	2-5-0	1-6-0
Carolina	5-9-0	2-5-0	3-4-0	6-7-1	2-4-1	4-3-0	10-4-0	5-2-0	5-2-0
Chicago	7-7-0	4-3-0	3-4-0	4-10-0	3-4-0	1-6-0	5-9-0	2-5-0	3-4-0
Cincinnati	1-13-0	1-6-0	0-7-0	5-8-1	1-5-1	4-3-0	5-8-1	4-2-1	1-6-0
Cleveland	6-8-0	4-3-0	2-5-0	5-8-1	3-3-1	2-5-0	7-7-0	4-3-0	3-4-0
Dallas	7-7-0	4-3-0	3-4-0	8-6-0	4-3-0	4-3-0	9-5-0	4-3-0	5-2-0
Denver	5-9-0	3-3-0	2-6-0	8-6-0	4-2-0	4-4-0	6-8-0	3-3-0	3-5-0
Detroit	3-10-1	2-5-0	1-5-1	5-9-0	3-4-0	2-5-0	9-5-0	6-1-0	3-4-0
Green Bay	11-3-0	7-1-0	4-2-0	9-5-0	5-3-0	4-2-0	6-8-0	3-5-0	3-3-0
Houston	9-5-0	5-2-0	4-3-0	7-7-0	2-5-0	5-2-0	6-8-0	3-4-0	3-4-0
Indianapolis	6-8-0	4-3-0	2-5-0	6-6-2	3-4-0	3-2-2	8-6-0	5-2-0	3-4-0
Jacksonville	5-9-0	2-5-0	3-4-0	6-8-0	2-5-0	4-3-0	7-6-1	3-4-0	4-2-1
Kansas City	10-4-0	4-3-0	6-1-0	9-5-0	4-3-0	5-2-0	7-7-0	4-3-0	3-4-0
L.A. Chargers	5-9-0	2-5-0	3-4-0	4-9-1	1-5-1	3-4-0	6-8-0	2-5-0	4-3-0
L.A. Rams	8-6-0	4-3-0	4-3-0	9-5-0	4-3-0	5-2-0	5-9-0	2-5-0	3-4-0
Miami	3-11-0	2-5-0	1-6-0	7-7-0	3-4-0	4-3-0	7-7-0	4-3-0	3-4-0
Minnesota	10-4-0	6-0-0	4-4-0	8-6-0	4-2-0	4-4-0	8-6-0	3-3-0	5-3-0
New England	11-3-0	5-1-0	6-2-0	8-6-0	3-3-0	5-3-0	5-9-0	2-4-0	3-5-0
New Orleans	11-3-0	6-2-0	5-1-0	9-5-0	4-4-0	5-1-0	7-7-0	4-4-0	3-3-0
N.Y. Giants	3-11-0	2-5-0	1-6-0	6-8-0	2-5-0	4-3-0	8-6-0	3-4-0	5-2-0
N.Y. Jets	5-9-0	4-3-0	1-6-0	5-9-0	3-4-0	2-5-0	7-7-0	2-5-0	5-2-0
Oakland	6-8-0	5-3-0	1-5-0	6-8-0	4-4-0	2-4-0	7-7-0	4-4-0	3-3-0
Philadelphia	7-7-0	4-3-0	3-4-0	5-9-0	2-5-0	3-4-0	7-7-0	2-5-0	5-2-0
Pittsburgh	8-6-0	5-3-0	3-3-0	7-5-2	4-3-1	3-2-1	3-11-0	3-5-0	0-6-0
San Francisco	11-3-0	5-2-0	6-1-0	8-5-1	3-3-1	5-2-0	7-7-0	4-3-0	3-4-0
Seattle	11-3-0	4-2-0	7-1-0	7-6-1	2-4-0	5-2-1	8-6-0	4-2-0	4-4-0
Tampa Bay	7-7-0	2-4-0	5-3-0	5-8-1	0-5-1	5-3-0	11-3-0	5-1-0	6-2-0
Tennessee	8-6-0	4-3-0	4-3-0	8-6-0	4-3-0	4-3-0	8-6-0	4-3-0	4-3-0
Washington	3-11-0	1-6-0	2-5-0	6-8-0	2-5-0	4-3-0	6-8-0	4-3-0	2-5-0

**ATLANTA 27 Jacksonville 19.** Last week, we cashed on these pages with Atlanta in their outright upset over the 49ers. For those of you who had the UNDER in that game as well, our deepest sympathies. Meanwhile, Jacksonville got the big come-from-behind win that spoiled the Raiders' final home game in Oakland. Two teams that fare horrible in out-of-conference match-ups. Atlanta is 1-13 SU (-8.2 ppg) and 0-14 ATS (-10.4 ppg) vs AFC teams. Meanwhile, Jacksonville is 4-24 SU (-10.9 ppg) and 5-23 ATS (-7.7 ppg) vs NFC teams. Something's gotta give!

**2★ TENNESSEE 26 New Orleans 25.** Disappointing loss for the Titans last week as they need to win out and a loss by Houston to Tampa to win the division. Keep that in mind, if Houston wins on Saturday, Tennessee's motivation could come into question. Still, this is a must-win spot for them if they are also to try and keep pace with Pittsburgh in the Wild Card. Right now 538 gives them a 58% chance to make the playoffs. Meanwhile, Drew Brees broke the all-time TD record on MNF in the Saints easy win. However, despite their 5-1 road record, the Saints are -32 ypg and how much do they have left after that game vs San Fran and the emotion of the Colts game.

**WASHINGTON 22 N.Y. GIANTS 20.** Our condolences to those of you that took Washington last week. The Redskins were covering every single second of the game until the final play! Meanwhile, the Giants beat us on these pages last week as they beat the Dolphins in Manning's likely final home game (he did throw 3 INT's!). Manning is now 117-117 SU in his career. RB Barkley was the big story with his first 100-yard game since Week 2. Don't see much value here. Pass.

**Pittsburgh 20 N.Y. JETS 19.** Pittsburgh has scored more than 1 TD on offense just once in their last 7 games. Now you want to lay a FG on the road with that? One of the obvious stories here is Jets RB Le'Veon Bell vs his former team. Bell is coming off his best game as a Jet (87 yards). The Steelers are just 26-38 ATS (41%) as away favorites under Tomlin and are playing with playoff pressure here. Lean Jets.

**MIAMI 26 Cincinnati 24.** While we did cash on these pages last week fading the Bengals, note they were -5 in TO's. Teams that are -5 in TO's are just 6-160-1 SU (-17.8 ppg) and 7-159-1 ATS (-16.1 ppg) in the last 30 years. Now they take on a Miami team that blew a 10-7 lead to the Giants last week. We don't see much value here. With two teams with questionable motivation (can you say battling for better draft positions?), we lean OVER.

**INDIANAPOLIS 26 Carolina 19.** Will Griener who hasn't taken a snap since preseason will get his first start here for the Panthers. Does he give the Panthers new life after Kyle Allen had been struggling? Or is this the start of the "fire sale" of the Panthers into the off-season? Both teams are out of the playoff picture. The Panthers did make it a game vs the Seahawks last week while the same couldn't be said for the Colts. We don't see much value here regardless.

**Baltimore 30 CLEVELAND 20.** Obviously, the Ravens have revenge for their last loss of the season. Since that 40-25 loss to the Browns, the Ravens are 10-0 SU (+18 ppg) and 7-3 ATS (+12.5 ppg). Meanwhile, the Browns season basically came to an end last week in the desert as they lost by 14 to the lowly Cardinals. With a win, the Ravens can clinch home-field. We don't see too much value here as clearly the Ravens motivation is being priced into this line.

**Dallas 24 PHILADELPHIA 23.** A win here for Dallas clinches the NFC East for them. Obviously, the Cowboys are coming off their best performance of the season as they crushed the Rams last Sunday. The same can't be said of the Eagles who scored 2 TD's in the final :30 to not only win but get a miracle cover vs the Redskins. That's two straight comebacks vs the bottom of the NFC. The Cowboys are the better team but do you trust them?

**2★ Arizona (plus the points) SEATTLE 28 Arizona 21.** Does Seattle start looking ahead to next week's showdown vs San Francisco if they get a comfortable lead? That might lead to the back-door being left open for the Cardinals. Arizona should be playing with more confidence after snapping their 6-game losing streak last week vs Cleveland. Seattle is a pretty pedestrian 14-8 SU and 10-11-1 ATS (-2 ppg) at home the last 3 years. We like the dog.

**Kansas City 24 CHICAGO 20.** The Chiefs have won 4 straight games and that defense is starting to gel now allowing just 11 ppg in that span. The Bears are officially eliminated from the playoffs despite having a 416-292 yard edge vs the Packers last week. Remember this is Matt Nagy vs his former team and mentor Andy Reid and its' Trubisky, the Bears pick in the 2017 Draft when they could've taken Patrick Mahomes. We lean with the dog and the UNDER.

Monday, December 23rd

**3★ MINNESOTA 27 Green Bay 19.** Minnesota is taking some money in the market place and we couldn't agree more. Green Bay is one of the most overrated teams in the NFL as they are -35 ypg on the season despite their 11-3 record. The Packers are 7-1 in games decided by 8-points or less and last week were -123 yards in a win over Chicago. Meanwhile, Minnesota at 10-4 is +34 ypg on the season. Kirk Cousins is 0-8 SU/ATS on Monday Night Football but he gets that money off his back here. The Vikings are 28-10-1 ATS (+2.6 ppg, 74%) at home when laying less than 7 under head Zimmer.