

## Bowls dash NCAA football playoff hopes



**Jayme Blaschke**  
Sports Editor

Their days were numbered, so everyone thought. The bowl system was a dinosaur, and like the great reptiles that died out 65 million years ago, so too would the college bowl games become extinct. Depending on polls to determine the national champion was too unpredictable, many argued, and others longed for the increased revenue an extended playoff season would bring.

The last straw seemed to come when the Internal Revenue Service announced it might start taxing corporate sponsorship of bowls. Without the money from big business, all but a few of the biggest bowls would curl up and die, and no one doubted a sanctioned playoff would replace them.

Fortunately (or unfortunately, depending on your opinion of bowls), a good number of the big boys have noticed this fact, and have taken steps to head the dreaded playoffs off at the proverbial pass.

The three granddaddy bowls (excluding the inbred Rosebowl) have amazingly chunked aside their enormous egos, and have all but clinched a deal to set up a New Year's day playoff on their own terms.

The bowls involved, the Cotton, Sugar and Orange, each host the champion team of the Southwest, Southeast, and Big Eight conferences, respectively. Schools from these three conferences usually make up over half of the nation's top 20, an impressive ratio. However, the new proposal would match the highest ranked conference champs with the highest ranked teams from the ACC and Big East conferences, as well as Notre Dame.

This alliance-to-end-all-alliances gives the three bowls over two thirds of the nationally ranked teams from which to choose their matchups. More than half of the country's television markets are included in the alliance, allowing the bowls to dictate the terms of broadcast contracts.

To hedge all bets, a fourth bowl, probably either the Fiesta or Citrus, will be added before all is said and done to offer two at-large berths, effectively covering any national championship scenario.

Imagine four bowls, each showcasing top ten matchups. Even with the IRS taxing corporate sponsors, the revenue generated would easily exceed the amount needed to keep the bowls afloat.

The matchups will be better, the payoffs greater, and there will be little doubt over who the national champion is.

There will be a playoff, but it will be held in the bowls, on New Year's Day.



Members of the Texas A&M Sailing club practice on Bryan Utilities Lake. The team recently placed second in national competition, beating out 12 other teams from across the nation, and is looking forward to building on that success in the coming year.

## Sailing club makes waves

By David Leahy  
The Battalion

The Texas A&M Sailing team's season finished in April, but their excitement at placing second in the nationals has continued, building enthusiasm for next year.

The A&M Sailing team finished second only to the host, perennial powerhouse Tulane University. The nationals were held at the Southern Yacht Club in New Orleans on April 20-21. A total of 14 teams competed in the event.

Two-man fleets were used in the event and 7 Aggies participated (the team consists of 25 people). The team included team captain Chris Junge, Tammie Bilan-

cich, David Hiebert, Christy Hanle, Larry Wise, Mark Zuteck, and Brian Walker.

Although the A&M Sailing team practices at the Bryan Utilities Lake, competition from their district helped prepare them for the nationals. A&M's district is part of the Southeast Intercollegiate Sailing Association, which includes the universities of Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas, as well as teams from Alabama, Louisiana and West Florida.

On their way to their confrontation against Tulane, the A&M Sailing team defeated Spring Hill (Alabama), Baylor University, the University of Texas, Southwest Texas State, West Florida, and the University of North Texas.

Sailing club member Chris Junge said

even though sailing is physically taxing, it is not all physical exertion.

"Sailing is very mental in college," he said. "There's a lot of mind games out there, such as where to go and the fastest way to get there. You're always having to deal with the wind."

Despite the intense work involved, Junge said sailing is still entertaining.

"We had a lot of fun at the nationals," he said. "The winds ranged from 0 to 25 miles per hour, and we got to compete against a lot of great competition."

"We know a lot of the other opponents and we all had a great time," Junge said. "The fastest four people there (at the nationals) were working their way toward the 1992 Summer Olympics."

## Twins upbeat despite end of 15 game win streak

BALTIMORE (AP) — One loss isn't about to disappoint the Minnesota Twins, especially after their club-record 15-game winning streak has them battling Oakland for first place in the AL West.

The Twins' streak, which ended with a 6-5 loss to Baltimore on Monday night, rocketed them into the AL West lead entering Tuesday's game at Memorial Stadium. The Twins were in fifth place before the streak, two games under .500.

"We enjoyed ourselves during the streak," Kirby Puckett said. "It's over, but we're still proud. Most of all we're in the pennant race. We have nothing to hang our heads about."

The streak was the longest in the majors this year and eighth longest in AL history. But it had to end sometime.

"It was inevitable," Puckett said. "It's like living and dying. We're all going to die one day, we just don't know when. We didn't know when we were going to lose, and we hoped it would be later than sooner, but today was just the day for it to happen."

Texas and Seattle had lengthy winning streaks earlier this season. Once beaten, both teams immediately went into tailspins. Puckett, however, shrugged off the possibility the same thing might happen to Minnesota.

"They're Seattle and Texas, we're the Twins. Who cares what they did?" he said. "We're playing good baseball right

now and I don't see any reason for it to stop."

Certainly, the Twins didn't put any pressure on themselves during the streak. As game-time approached on Monday, most of the players in the clubhouse were watching the U.S. Open on TV.

"We were pretty low-key about it," Kent Hrbek said. "We were watching the golf match more than getting ready to play. But that's the way we've been doing it the whole stretch."

When Baltimore rallied to score three runs in the ninth, Minnesota was saddled with its first loss in June. Last year, the Twins brought a 28-19 record into June — and proceeded to fall out of contention by losing 21 of 28 games.

This season it's been a jolly June, and one loss won't change all that.

"You're going to lose a game sooner or later. You don't play in the big leagues and keep winning day after day," said pitcher Allan Anderson.

The Twins did just that for longer than any team in the majors since Kansas City won 16 straight in 1977. Now the streak is just a sweet memory.

"It was fun. It's always fun to win," Puckett said. "I never played on a team that won 15 in a row. I'm proud of what we did. Now, we have to come out and start all over again."

## Japan wins '98 Winter Olympics

TOKYO (AP) — When it comes to bringing home big international events, Japan is quickly becoming the nation to beat.

Salt Lake City found that out over the weekend as the International Olympic Committee snubbed that city's bid for the 1998 Winter Games in favor of Nagano, Japan.

The mayor and governor of Nagano returned home Tuesday to a hero's welcome. Nearly 2,000 people greeted them at Nagano's train station and then watched as they were paraded to city hall led by a police band.

"We have a lot of work ahead of us," said Terumasa Aoki, of Nagano's Olympic Bidding Committee. "For the people of Nagano, this is the fulfillment of a 50-year-old dream."

But even before the thrill of victory was worn off, some Japanese already are looking ahead to the next item on their shopping list: soccer's World Cup.

"It's hard to compare the Olympics and the World Cup, but it was very reassuring to see Nagano win," said Kuniomi Sakai, deputy head of the Japan World Cup Candidate Committee, set up just last week.

"Like Nagano, I think geography will be an advantage for us," he said. One of Nagano's main pitches to the IOC was the fact that no Winter Games had been held in Asia since 1972. Asia never has been host to a World Cup.

In 1964, Japan became the first Asian host for an Olympics, and the event became a symbol of the nation's resurgence from the humiliation of defeat in World War II.

Just eight years later, the northern Japanese city of Sapporo was host to the Winter Games, again becoming the first in Asia.

Today, Japan, with its rich economy and seemingly endless supply of fans for just about any sport, has become one of the world's premier hosts. Some examples:

—This summer, Tokyo will stage the World Championships of Track and Field, a prestigious event that, like the Olympics, is held only once every four years.

—The Toyota Cup, which decides the year's top soccer club and is arguably second in importance only to the World Cup, has been played in Tokyo since 1980.

—To sellout crowds, the NBA played its first regular season game outside of North America in Tokyo last November. NFL teams square off at the Tokyo Dome each year, also before tens of thousands of screaming fans, even though very few Japanese actually have played American football.

—Mike Tyson chose to fight in Tokyo twice, though he might not come again since it was here that he lost his heavyweight boxing crown to James "Buster" Douglas last year.

—Each year Japanese fans jam stadiums to watch Virginia Slims tennis, U.S. college basketball and Formula One auto racing, not to mention the cult-like support for sumo wrestling and baseball, Japan's national sports.

"This is an excellent way of exchanging culture, and of contributing to international peace," Nagano's Aoki said of the plethora of events held in Japan.

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