



2015 POPEYES BAHAMAS BOWL ■ DECEMBER 24, 2015; NOON ET **ESPN** ■ POPEYESBAHAMASBOWL.COM

POPEYES BAHAMAS BOWL COMMUNICATIONS

Chris Pika
Director of Communications
chris.pika@bahamasbowl.com
678-908-4853 (cell)

POPEYES BAHAMAS BOWL IMPORTANT DATES

- Nov. 2** Online media credential applications available
- Dec. 4** Marathon MAC Football Championship - Detroit, Mich. (Ford Field)
- Dec. 5** Conference USA Football Championship - Site TBA
- Dec. 6** Selection Sunday (teams announced after 3 pm ET)
- Dec. 10-11** Team site visits
- Dec. 11** Head Coaches Press Conference (Thomas A. Robinson National Stadium)
- Dec. 11** Credential applications close
- Dec. 20** Team Arrivals
- Dec. 21-23** Team Practices
- Dec. 23** Popeyes Bahamas Bowl Press Conference (Thomas A. Robinson National Stadium).
- Dec. 24** Popeyes Bahamas Bowl (Noon ET; Thomas A. Robinson National Stadium; Nassau, Bahamas - ESPN)

#PASSPORTTOKICKOFF

#PassportToKickoff is not only our hashtag, but a reminder that all U.S. citizens must have a valid passport to travel to the **Bahamas & the Popeyes Bahamas Bowl**. For passport info: passports.state.gov

POPEYES BAHAMAS BOWL WEEK 9 NOTEBOOK

PASSPORT STAMPED (BOWL-ELIGIBLE TEAMS): Toledo (7-0), Marshall (7-1), Bowling Green (6-2) and WKU (6-2). **AT CUSTOMS (ONE VICTORY SHY):** Louisiana Tech (5-3), Northern Illinois (5-3), Ohio (5-3) and Southern Miss (5-3).

THIS WEEK: Week 9 begins Thursday with a pair of MAC games as Buffalo (3-4, 1-2 MAC) visits Miami (1-7, 0-4 MAC) and Western Michigan (4-3, 3-0 MAC) goes to Eastern Michigan (1-7, 0-4 MAC).

Friday, the two teams that played on the final day of the regular season to determine the West Division title last year meet again when Louisiana Tech (5-3, 3-1 C-USA) visits Rice (4-3, 2-1 C-USA).

Saturday in C-USA action, WKU (6-0, 4-2 C-USA) will make its first visit to Old Dominion (3-4, 1-2 C-USA), UTEP (3-4, 1-2 C-USA), dressed in all orange uniforms, travels to Southern Miss (5-3, 3-1 C-USA), wearing their traditional all-black home uniform on Halloween in Hattiesburg. Marshall (7-1, 4-0 C-USA) heads to Charlotte (2-5, 0-4 C-USA), the Shula Bowl will be renewed in Boca Raton when FIU (4-4, 2-2 C-USA) makes the 45-mile trek north to face Florida Atlantic (1-6, 1-3 C-USA) and West Division in-state rivals UTSA (1-6, 1-2 C-USA) and North Texas (0-7, 0-4 C-USA) meet.

Saturday in the MAC, UMass (1-6, 0-3 MAC) is at Ball State (2-6, 1-3 MAC) and Central Michigan (4-4, 3-1 MAC) goes to Akron (3-4, 1-2 MAC).

The MAC transitions into weeknight games with a single contest each next Tuesday and Wednesday. Tuesday, Northern Illinois (5-3, 3-1 MAC) is at Toledo (7-0, 4-0 MAC) in a key West Division game. The next night, Ohio (5-3, 2-2 MAC) plays at Bowling Green (6-2, 4-0 MAC) in a battle of the top two East Division teams.

POLLING PLACE: Toledo (7-0) is No. 20 in both the *Associated Press* Top 25 and the *Amway USA Today* Coaches' Top 25 poll this week. Marshall (7-1) is receiving votes in the *USA Today* poll.

#MACtion BEGINS: This season the MAC will have 16 games on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday nights during the last five weeks of the regular season.

C-USA STANDINGS



EAST DIVISION

	C-USA	Overall
* Marshall	4-0	7-1
* WKU	4-0	6-2
FIU	2-2	4-4
Middle Tennessee	2-2	3-5
Old Dominion	1-2	3-4
Florida Atlantic	1-3	1-6
Charlotte	0-4	2-5

WEST DIVISION

	C-USA	Overall
Louisiana Tech	3-1	5-3
Southern Miss	3-1	5-3
Rice	2-1	4-3
UTEP	1-2	3-4
UTSA	1-2	1-6
North Texas	0-4	0-7
* - bowl eligible		

MAC STANDINGS



EAST DIVISION

	MAC	Overall
* Bowling Green	4-0	6-2
Ohio	2-2	5-3
Kent State	2-2	3-5
Akron	1-2	3-4
Buffalo	1-2	3-4
UMass	0-3	1-6
Miami	0-4	1-7

WEST DIVISION

	MAC	Overall
* Toledo	4-0	7-0
Western Michigan	3-0	4-3
Northern Illinois	3-1	5-3
Central Michigan	3-1	4-4
Ball State	1-3	2-6
Eastern Michigan	0-4	1-7
* - bowl eligible		

WEEK 9 SCHEDULE

CONFERENCE USA

Friday, October 30

* Louisiana Tech at Rice (FS1)

Saturday, October 31

- * WKU at Old Dominion (FSN)
- * UTEP at Southern Miss (FCS)
- * FIU at Florida Atlantic (ASN)
- * Marshall at Charlotte (FSN)
- * UTSA at North Texas (ASN)

MID-AMERICAN CONFERENCE

Thursday, October 29

- * Buffalo at Miami (ESPN3)
- * Western Michigan at Eastern Michigan (CBSSN)

Saturday, October 31

- * UMass at Ball State (ESPN3)
- * Central Michigan at Akron (ESPN3)

Tuesday, November 3

- * Northern Illinois at Toledo (ESPN2)

Wednesday, November 4

- * Ohio at Bowling Green (ESPN2)

* - conference games

(TV/digital network in parentheses)

ASN - American Sports Network

CBSSN - CBS Sports Network

ESPN3 - ESPN3.com (online)

FCS - Fox College Sports

FS1 - Fox Sports 1

FSN - Fox Sports Net

WEEK 8 RESULTS

CONFERENCE USA

Saturday, October 24

- * Southern Miss 44, Charlotte 10
- * Louisiana Tech 45, Middle Tennessee 16
- * Marshall 30, North Texas 13
- * FIU 41, Old Dominion 12
- * UTEP 27, Florida Atlantic 17
- Rice 38, Army 31
- No. 5 LSU 48, WKU 20

MID-AMERICAN CONFERENCE

Saturday, October 24

- * Bowling Green 48, Kent State 0
- * Western Michigan 35, Miami 13
- * Central Michigan 23, Ball State 21
- * No. 19 Toledo 51, UMass 35
- * Northern Illinois 49, Eastern Michigan 21
- * Buffalo 41, Ohio 17

* - conference games

FALCONS FLYING HIGH

Bowling Green senior quarterback **Matt Johnson** has six games over 400 yards passing this season and four games with five or more touchdown passes. Johnson continues to lead all FBS quarterbacks with 3,321 passing yards and is tied for first with 29 passing TDs.

Bowling Green wide receiver **Roger Lewis** also leads the nation with 1,122 yards receiving after eight games this season.

The 6-2 start is the best for Bowling Green since 2004, and the 4-0 MAC start is the best for the Falcons program since 2003.

WEEK 8 INDIVIDUAL HONORS

QB Alex McGough, FIU: The junior completed 31 of 39 passes for 390 yards and three TDs in a 41-12 victory over Old Dominion for C-USA Offensive Player of the Week honors.

CB Bryson Abraham, Louisiana Tech: The senior returned an interception for a touchdown, had two pass breakups and three total tackles in a 45-16 win over Middle Tennessee for C-USA Defensive Player of the Week honors.

KR Jalen Richard, Southern Miss: The senior returned a kickoff 95 yards for a TD and had a total of 222 all-purpose yards in a 44-10 win at Charlotte for C-USA Special Teams Player of the Week honors.

QB Matt Johnson, Bowling Green: The senior passed for 430 yards and five TDs and rushed for a TD in a 48-0 win at Kent State for MAC East Division Offensive Player of the Week honors.

LB Okezie Alozie, Buffalo: The senior had two interceptions, including one for a TD, and a sack in a 41-17 win over Ohio for MAC East Division Defensive Player of the Week honors.

P Joseph Davidson, Bowling Green: The sophomore had four punts for a 52.5-yard average in a 48-0 win at Kent State for MAC East Division Special Teams Player of the Week honors.

QB Drew Hare, Northern Illinois: The junior threw four touchdown passes in a 49-21 win over Eastern Michigan for MAC West Division Offensive Player of the Week honors.

LB Robert Spillane, Western Michigan: The sophomore had nine tackles (3.5 for loss) and 1.5 sacks in a 35-13 win over Miami for MAC West Division Defensive Player of the Week honors.

K Brian Eavey, Central Michigan: The junior had three field goals and two PATs in a 23-21 win at Ball State for MAC West Division Special Teams Player of the Week honors.

“POWER FIVE” VICTORIES

A list of Conference USA and MAC victories over “Power Five” opponents (teams from the ACC, Big Ten, Big XII, Pac-12 and SEC)

C-USA/MAC Team	Opponent	Score
Sept. 3		
WKU (C-USA)	Vanderbilt (SEC)	14-12
Sept. 6		
Marshall (C-USA)	Purdue (Big Ten)	41-31
Sept. 12		
Bowling Green (MAC)	Maryland (Big Ten)	48-27
Toledo (MAC)	No. 18 Arkansas (SEC)	16-12
Sept. 19		
Toledo (MAC)	Iowa State (Big XII)	30-23 (2 OT)
Sept. 26		
Bowling Green (MAC)	Purdue (Big Ten)	35-28

POPEYES BAHAMAS BOWL MEDIA PROJECTIONS

Media Organization (Reporter) - Date: C-USA vs. MAC Matchup

USA Today (Erick Smith) - Oct. 28: Louisiana Tech vs. Bowling Green

Phil Steele Magazine (Phil Steele) - Oct. 27: Marshall vs. Toledo

10thYearSeniors.com (John Marc Nutt) - Oct. 26: Marshall vs. Bowling Green

Nassau Tribune (Rinaldo Dorsett) - Oct. 26: Louisiana Tech vs. Bowling Green

The Sporting News (Bill Bender) - Oct. 26: FIU vs. Western Michigan

Bleacher Report (Bryan Fischer) - Oct. 26: WKU vs. Bowling Green

CollegeFootballNews.com (Pete Fiutak) - Oct. 26: Marshall vs. Bowling Green

ESPN.com (Brett McMurphy) - Oct. 25: Louisiana Tech vs. Northern Illinois

ESPN.com (Mark Schlabach) - Oct. 25: Bowling Green vs. Marshall

SB Nation (Jason Kirk) - Oct. 25: Old Dominion vs. Ohio

CBSSports.com (Jerry Palm) - Oct. 25: Middle Tennessee vs. Bowling Green

Orlando Sentinel (Brant Parsons) - Oct. 21: FIU vs. Bowling Green

SI.com (Zac Ellis) - Oct. 20: Old Dominion vs. Northern Illinois

Athlon Sports (Steven Lassin) - Oct. 14: Louisiana Tech vs. Western Michigan

FOXSports.com (Stuart Mandel) - Aug. 25: Middle Tennessee vs. Western Michigan

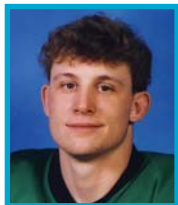
Associated Press (Ralph Russo) - June 9: Middle Tennessee vs. Ball State



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Each week in 2015, the Popeyes Bahamas Bowl will spotlight an alumni player from each of our partner conferences, Conference USA and the MAC.

CHAD PENNINGTON (MARSHALL)



Chad Pennington, a 1999 MAC Offensive Player of the Year, played his college career at Marshall from 1995-99.

Pennington went from fourth-string quarterback to starter during the Thundering Herd's 1995 run to the NCAA Division I- AA title game.

After a redshirt season in 1996, Pennington returned to his starting role in 1997 as Marshall moved up to I-A and won the MAC title. In 1998, he led the Herd to another conference title and their first bowl victory over Louisville in the 1998 Motor City Bowl.

As a senior, Pennington and the Thundering Herd went 13-0, Marshall captured its third straight MAC title and the Herd won the Motor City Bowl over BYU. He was fifth in 1999 Heisman Trophy voting and won the Sammy Baugh Trophy as the top collegiate passer.

He finished his Marshall career with 1,026 completions for 13,143 yards and 115 TDs.

Off the field, Pennington was selected as the 1999 William V. Campbell Trophy winner, considered the Academic Heisman, and a finalist for a Rhodes Scholarship.

He was selected No. 18 overall by the New York Jets in the 2000 NFL Draft.

He played seven seasons (2000-07) with the Jets, where he helped New York qualify for the playoffs three times. He moved to the Miami Dolphins (2008-10), where he helped Miami to a 11-5 record in his first season in 2008 and the club's first playoff appearance since 2001.

A two-time NFL Comeback Player of the Year award winner (2006, 2008), Pennington was a six-time AFC Offensive Player of the Week honoree by the NFL.

POPEYES BAHAMAS BOWL PARTICIPANT SELECTION

The highest-ranked conference champion by the College Football Playoff Selection Committee from the American Athletic, Conference USA, Mid-American, Mountain West or Sun Belt will play annually in one of the College Football Playoff bowls (VIZIO Fiesta and Chick-fil-A Peach bowls for the 2015 season) if it is not selected for the Playoff Semifinals.

C-USA has 2015 tie-ins with the **Popeyes Bahamas, Arizona, Gildan New Mexico, Miami Beach, R&L Carriers New Orleans, St. Petersburg** and **Zaxby's Heart of Dallas** bowls, with a secondary tie-in with the **Camping World Independence Bowl** (if either the ACC or the SEC does not have enough eligible teams). There is no set selection order among C-USA's bowl partners

The **GoDaddy Bowl** has first choice of a MAC bowl-eligible team, and the remainder of the selections will follow, with no set selection order among the MAC's bowl partners. The MAC has 2015 tie-ins with **Popeyes Bahamas, Famous Idaho Potato, GoDaddy, Marmot Boca Raton** and **Raycom Media Camellia** bowls, with secondary tie-ins with the **San Diego County Credit Union Poinsettia Bowl** (if Army is not bowl eligible), various ESPN owned-and-operated bowls and the **Quick Lane Bowl** (if either ACC or Big Ten does not have enough eligible teams).

The **2015 Popeyes Bahamas Bowl** participants will be announced **Sunday, December 6**.



ESPN EVENTS

ESPN Events, a division of ESPN, owns and operates a large portfolio of collegiate sporting events worldwide. The roster includes three Labor Day weekend college football games; 13 college bowl games, 10 college basketball events and two college award shows, which accounts for approximately 250-plus hours of programming, reaches almost 64 million viewers and attracts over 700,000 attendees each year. With satellite offices in Boca Raton, Boise, Birmingham, Dallas-Fort Worth, Albuquerque, St. Petersburg and Las Vegas, ESPN Events builds relationships with conferences, schools and local communities, as well as providing unique experiences for teams and fans.

ESPN Events also manages the Big 12 Corporate Partner Program.

Collegiate Football

AdvoCare Texas Kickoff (Houston); AdvoCare V100 Texas Bowl (Houston); Birmingham Bowl (Alabama); Celebration Bowl (Atlanta); Famous Idaho Potato Bowl (Boise); Gildan New Mexico Bowl (Albuquerque); Hawai'i Bowl (Honolulu); Lockheed Martin Armed Forces Bowl (Dallas-Fort Worth); Marmot Boca Raton Bowl (Florida); MEAC/SWAC Challenge presented by Disney (Orlando, Fla.); Orlando Kickoff (Florida); Popeyes Bahamas Bowl (Nassau); Raycom Media Camellia Bowl (Montgomery, Ala.); Royal Purple Las Vegas Bowl (Nevada); St. Petersburg Bowl (Florida); The Home Depot College Football Awards (Atlanta) and Zaxby's Heart of Dallas Bowl (Dallas-Fort Worth)

Collegiate Basketball

AdvoCare Invitational (Walt Disney World Resort near Orlando, Fla.); Armed Forces Classic (Marine Corps Base Camp Smedley D. Butler, Okinawa, Japan); DIRECTV Wooden Legacy (Orange County, Calif.); College Basketball Awards Presented by Wendy's (Los Angeles); Gildan Charleston Classic (South Carolina); Hawaiian Airlines Diamond Head Classic (Honolulu); Jimmy V Men's Classic Presented by Corona (New York City); Jimmy V Women's Classic Presented by Corona (Hartford/Storrs, Conn.); NIT Season Tip-Off (Brooklyn, N.Y.); Puerto Rico Tip-Off (San Juan) and State Farm Champions Classic (Chicago)

ESPN EVENTS

