



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

- Now** Online media credential applications available at sportsystems.com/bahamasbowl
- 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 11 NOTEBOOK

PASSPORT STAMPED (BOWL-ELIGIBLE TEAMS): Bowling Green (7-2), Louisiana Tech (7-3), Marshall (8-2), Northern Illinois (6-3), Southern Miss (6-3), Toledo (7-1), Western Michigan (6-3), WKU (8-2). **AT CUSTOMS (ONE VICTORY SHY):** Buffalo (5-4), Central Michigan (5-4), FIU (5-5), Ohio (5-4).

KEY GAMES: Wednesday night, a battle of MAC division leaders takes place as Bowling Green (7-2, 5-0 MAC) travels to Western Michigan (6-3, 5-0 MAC). A WMU victory clinches the West Division title for a berth in the Marathon MAC Football Championship Game. A trio of 5-4 home teams in midweek MAC games - Ohio (vs. Kent State), Central Michigan (vs. Toledo) and Buffalo (vs. Northern Illinois) - could gain bowl eligibility with victories.

In Conference USA, division leaders WKU and Louisiana Tech are both on a bye week. FIU (5-5, 3-3 C-USA) can gain bowl eligibility with a victory at Marshall (8-2, 5-1 C-USA) in a key East Division game. Marshall needs a victory to stay one game in the loss column behind WKU in the East race. Southern Miss (6-3, 4-1 C-USA), which trails LA Tech by one-half game in the West Division race, plays at Rice (4-5, 2-3 C-USA) in a key West game.

DIXON DELIVERS: Louisiana Tech senior RB **Kenneth Dixon** has now scored a touchdown in 36 of 44 career games (two short of **Tim Tebow's** NCAA record) and passed the 4,000-yard mark in rushing yards (4,346). Dixon set a C-USA record with six rushing TDs against North Texas last Saturday. The Bulldogs are bowl eligible.

GOLDEN IMPROVEMENT: Bowl-eligible Southern Miss has the third-best improvement in scoring offense in the country. The Golden Eagles are averaging 35.7 points per game, up from 19 points per game in 2014. The USM defense is allowing 12.7 fewer points per game than in 2014 - the fifth-best improvement in the country.

BIG NIGHT FOR WESTERN MICHIGAN: Western Michigan (6-3) became bowl eligible for the second straight season last Thursday with a 54-7 win over Ball State behind 711 yards of total offense, seventh-most in MAC history.

HUSKIES BOWL ELIGIBLE AGAIN: Northern Illinois (6-3) gained bowl eligibility with a 32-27 win over previously unbeaten Toledo last Tuesday to extend the Huskies current winning streak to four games. NIU is bowl eligible for the eighth consecutive season.

POLLING PLACE: Toledo (7-1) and WKU (8-2) are receiving votes in the *Associated Press* Top 25 and *Amway USA Today* Coaches' Top 25 polls. Bowling Green (7-2) is receiving votes in the *USA Today* poll.

C-USA STANDINGS



EAST DIVISION

	C-USA	Overall
* WKU	6-0	8-2
* Marshall	5-1	8-2
Middle Tennessee	3-2	4-5
FIU	3-3	5-5
Old Dominion	2-3	4-5
Florida Atlantic	2-4	2-7
Charlotte	0-6	2-7

WEST DIVISION

	C-USA	Overall
* Louisiana Tech	5-1	7-3
* Southern Miss	4-1	6-3
Rice	2-3	4-5
UTEP	2-3	4-5
UTSA	1-4	1-8
North Texas	1-5	1-8
* - bowl eligible		

MAC STANDINGS



EAST DIVISION

	MAC	Overall
* Bowling Green	5-0	7-2
Buffalo	3-2	5-4
Ohio	2-3	5-4
Kent State	2-3	3-6
Akron	2-3	4-5
Miami	1-5	2-8
UMass	0-5	1-8

WEST DIVISION

	MAC	Overall
* Western Michigan	5-0	6-3
* Toledo	4-1	7-1
* Northern Illinois	4-1	6-3
Central Michigan	4-1	5-4
Ball State	2-4	3-7
Eastern Michigan	0-6	1-9
* - bowl eligible		

WEEK 11 SCHEDULE

CONFERENCE USA

Saturday, November 14

- * Middle Tennessee at FAU (ASN)
- * UTEP at Old Dominion (FSN)
- North Texas at Tennessee (SECN)
- * UTSA at Charlotte (FCS)
- * FIU at Marshall (FSN)
- * Southern Miss at Rice (ASN)

MID-AMERICAN CONFERENCE

Tuesday, November 10

- * Kent State at Ohio (ESPN2)
- * Toledo at Central Michigan (ESPN2)

Wednesday, November 11

- * Northern Illinois at Buffalo (ESPN2)
- * Bowling Green at Western Michigan (ESPN2)

Saturday, November 14

- * Akron at Miami (ASN/ESPN3)
- * UMass at Eastern Michigan (ESPN3)

* - conference games
(TV/digital network in parentheses)
ASN - American Sports Network
CBSSN - CBS Sports Network
ESPN3 - ESPN3.com (online)
FCS - Fox College Sports
FSN - Fox Sports Net
SECN - SEC Network

WEEK 10 RESULTS

CONFERENCE USA

Friday, November 6

- * UTEP 24, Rice 21

Saturday, November 7

- * FIU 48, Charlotte 31
- * WKU 35, Florida Atlantic 19
- * Louisiana Tech 56, North Texas 13
- * Middle Tennessee 27, Marshall 24 (30T)
- * Old Dominion 36, UTSA 31

MID-AMERICAN CONFERENCE

Tuesday, November 3

- * Northern Illinois 32, No. 20 Toledo 27

Wednesday, November 4

- * Bowling Green 62, Ohio 24

Thursday, November 5

- * Buffalo 18, Kent State 17
- * Western Michigan 54, Ball State 7

Saturday, November 7

- * Akron 17, UMass 13
- * Miami 28, Eastern Michigan 13

* - conference games

WEEK 10 INDIVIDUAL HONORS

RB Kenneth Dixon, Louisiana Tech: The senior set a Conference USA record with six rushing touchdowns in a 56-13 win over North Texas for C-USA Offensive Player of the Week honors.

DT Mike Wakefield, FIU: The senior had seven tackles, four sacks and 5.5 tackles for loss in a 48-31 victory over Charlotte for C-USA Defensive Player of the Week honors.

DB Jeremy Cutrer, Middle Tennessee: The junior blocked a potential game-tying field goal in the third overtime in a 27-24 three-OT victory over Marshall for C-USA Special Teams Player of the Week honors.

RB Travis Greene, Bowling Green: The senior rushed for 106 yards and three TDs in a 62-24 victory over Ohio for MAC East Division Offensive Player of the Week honors.

DE JT Jones, Miami: The junior had seven tackles and four sacks in a 28-13 win over Eastern Michigan for MAC East Division Defensive Player of the Week honors.

P Tyler Grassman, Buffalo: The senior averaged 40.6 yards on eight punts in a 18-17 win over Kent State for MAC East Division Special Teams Player of the Week honors.

WR Corey Davis, Western Michigan: The junior had seven catches for 163 yards and three TDs in a 54-7 win over Ball State for MAC West Division Offensive Player of the Week honors.

LB Boomer Mays, Northern Illinois: The senior had 10 tackles (five solo) and a key interception in a 32-27 victory over Toledo for MAC West Division Defensive Player of the Week honors.

K Christian Hagan, Northern Illinois: The sophomore made all four of his field goals and two point-after kicks in a 32-27 victory over Toledo 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**

SI.com (Zac Ellis) - Nov. 10: Old Dominion vs. Northern Illinois

FOXSports.com (Stuart Mandel) - Nov. 10: Louisiana Tech vs. Toledo

10thYearSeniors.com (John Marc Nutt) - Nov. 9: Marshall vs. Bowling Green

Nassau Tribune (Renaldo Dorsett) - Nov. 9: Louisiana Tech vs. Bowling Green

The Sporting News (Bill Bender) - Nov. 9: Southern Miss vs. Toledo

Bleacher Report (Bryan Fischer) - Nov. 9: WKU vs. Toledo

CollegeFootballNews.com (Pete Fiutak) - Nov. 9: Old Dominion vs. Buffalo

ESPN.com (Brett McMurphy) - Nov. 8: Louisiana Tech vs. Northern Illinois

ESPN.com (Mark Schlabach) - Nov. 8: Marshall vs. Western Michigan

SB Nation (Jason Kirk) - Nov. 8: Old Dominion vs. Ohio

CBSSports.com (Jerry Palm) - Nov. 8: Marshall vs. Akron

USA Today (Erick Smith) - Nov. 5: WKU vs. Toledo

Orlando Sentinel (Brant Parsons) - Nov. 4: FIU vs. Western Michigan

Athlon Sports (Steven Lissan) - Nov. 4: Middle Tennessee vs. Western Michigan

Phil Steele Magazine (Phil Steele) - Nov. 3: Marshall vs. Toledo

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.

KHALIL MACK (BUFFALO)



Khalil Mack, the 2013 MAC Defensive Player of the Year, the 2013 Jack Lambert Award winner as the nation's top linebacker and a three-time first-team All-MAC performer, played his college career at Buffalo

from 2010-13.

Mack started all 48 games in which he appeared with the Bulls. He had a total of 327 tackles, 28.5 sacks, 75 tackles for loss, 16 forced fumbles, three fumble recoveries, four interceptions, 21 passes defended and 31 quarterback pressures during his four years.

He holds the NCAA FBS record for career forced fumbles and tied the FBS modern-day mark (since 2000) for tackles for loss. Mack also holds the school record for sacks.

Mack finished second in voting for the Butkus Award after his 2013 senior season, in which he was the MAC East Defensive Player of the Week three times. He led the Bulls in tackles (100), sacks (10.5) and interceptions (three).

In his junior season of 2012, Mack had 94 tackles, 21 tackles for loss and eight sacks to go with a pair of MAC East Defensive Player of the Week awards.

He was the fifth overall selection in the 2014 NFL Draft by the Oakland Raiders and made an immediate impact as a rookie.

He started all 16 games for the Raiders (only the third Raiders rookie linebacker to start all 16 games) and posted 84 tackles (59 solo) and four sacks as he finished third in voting for the NFL Defensive Rookie of the Year award by the Associated Press.

Mack was selected to the Pro Football Writers of America, Sports Illustrated and NFL.com All-Rookie teams.

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)

