



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 13 NOTEBOOK

PASSPORT STAMPED (BOWL-ELIGIBLE TEAMS): Akron (6-5), Bowling Green (8-3), Central Michigan (6-5), Louisiana Tech (8-3), Marshall (9-2), Middle Tennessee (6-5), Northern Illinois (8-3), Ohio (7-4), Southern Miss (8-3), Toledo (9-1), Western Michigan (6-5), WKU (9-2). **AT CUSTOMS (ONE VICTORY SHY):** Buffalo (5-6), Old Dominion (5-6).

KEY GAMES: Two teams go into the final weekend with a chance of bowl eligibility. In the MAC, Buffalo (5-6, 3-4 MAC) would be a record eighth team to qualify out of the conference with a victory at home over UMass (2-9, 1-6 MAC) on Friday. Saturday, Old Dominion (5-6, 3-4 C-USA) could join five other C-USA schools with bowl eligibility when it hosts Florida Atlantic (2-9, 2-5 C-USA).

C-USA TITLE GAME UPDATE: The matchup for the 11th annual C-USA Football Championship Game on Dec. 5 will be determined by the winners of a pair of head-to-head matchups this weekend to finish the regular season. The winner of the Marshall at WKU game Friday will win the East Division, while the winner of the Southern Miss at Louisiana Tech game Saturday will take the West Division. It is the first time in league history that a pair of head-to-head matchups will determine the title game participants.

MAC TITLE GAME UPDATE: Bowling Green has won the East Division and will play in the Marathon MAC Championship Game in Detroit on Dec. 4. The West Division Champion comes down to two final games this week for Northern Illinois and Toledo, both tied at 6-1 in the West. Ohio travels to Northern Illinois on Tuesday, Nov. 24, while Western Michigan goes to Toledo on Friday, Nov. 27. Northern Illinois can win the West Division with a win or a Toledo loss. While Toledo can win the West with a NIU loss and a Toledo win. NIU owns all tiebreakers in a two-way tie with Toledo or any 6-2 three or four-way tie scenario.

POLLING PLACE: Toledo (9-1) is ranked No. 24 in the *Associated Press* Top 25 and is receiving votes in the *Amway USA Today* Coaches' Top 25. WKU (9-2) is receiving votes in both the AP and coaches' polls, while Bowling Green (8-3) is receiving votes in the *USA Today* poll.

C-USA STANDINGS



EAST DIVISION

	C-USA	Overall
* WKU	7-0	9-2
* Marshall	6-1	9-2
* Middle Tennessee	5-2	6-5
Old Dominion	3-4	5-6
FIU	3-5	5-7
Florida Atlantic	2-5	2-9
Charlotte	0-7	2-9

WEST DIVISION

	C-USA	Overall
* Louisiana Tech	6-1	8-3
* Southern Miss	6-1	8-3
UTSA	3-4	3-8
Rice	2-5	4-7
UTEP	2-5	4-7
North Texas	1-6	1-10
* - bowl eligible		

MAC STANDINGS



EAST DIVISION

	MAC	Overall
*# Bowling Green	6-1	8-3
* Ohio	4-3	7-4
* Akron	4-3	6-5
Buffalo	3-4	5-6
Kent State	2-5	3-8
Miami	2-6	3-9
UMass	1-6	2-9

WEST DIVISION

	MAC	Overall
* Northern Illinois	6-1	8-3
* Toledo	6-1	9-1
* Western Michigan	5-2	6-5
* Central Michigan	5-2	6-5
Ball State	2-5	3-8
Eastern Michigan	0-7	1-10
* - bowl eligible; # - clinched division		

WEEK 13 SCHEDULE

CONFERENCE USA

Friday, November 27

* Marshall at WKU (FS1)

Saturday, November 28

- * Florida Atlantic at Old Dominion (ASN)
- * Southern Miss at Louisiana Tech (FSN)
- * Middle Tennessee at UTSA (FCS)
- * Charlotte at Rice (ASN)
- * UTEP at North Texas (FSN)

MID-AMERICAN CONFERENCE

Tuesday, November 24

- * Bowling Green at Ball State (ESPN3)
- * Ohio at Northern Illinois (ESPNU)

Friday, November 27

- * Western Michigan at Toledo (CBSSN)
- * Kent State at Akron (ASN/ESPN3)
- * Eastern Michigan at Central Michigan (ESPN3)
- * UMass at Buffalo (ESPNU)

END OF REGULAR SEASON

* - 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

“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

WEEK 12 RESULTS

CONFERENCE USA

Saturday, November 21

- * Middle Tennessee 41, North Texas 7
- * WKU 63, FIU 7
- * Louisiana Tech 17, UTEP 15
- * Southern Miss 56, Old Dominion 31
- * UTSA 34, Rice 24
- No. 8 Florida 20, Florida Atlantic 14 (OT)
- Kentucky 58, Charlotte 10

MID-AMERICAN CONFERENCE

Tuesday, November 17

- * Toledo 44, Bowling Green 28
- * Ohio 48, Ball State 31

Wednesday, November 18

- * Central Michigan 27, Kent State 15
- * Northern Illinois 27, Western Michigan 19

Saturday, November 21

- * Miami 20, UMass 13
- * Akron 42, Buffalo 21

* - conference games

WEEK 12 INDIVIDUAL HONORS

QB Brent Stockstill, Middle Tennessee: The freshman was 27 for 38 passing for 322 yards and three touchdowns in a 41-7 victory over North Texas for C-USA Offensive Player of the Week honors.

DE Trey Hendrickson, Florida Atlantic: The junior had five tackles, two sacks, a forced fumble and a blocked PAT in a OT loss at Florida for C-USA Defensive Player of the Week honors.

K Garrett Schwettman, WKU: The senior made all nine of his PAT kicks in a 63-7 victory over FIU for C-USA Special Teams Player of the Week honors.

QB Thomas Woodson, Akron: The sophomore completed 17 of 30 passes for 258 yards and four TDs in a 42-21 victory over Buffalo for MAC East Division Offensive Player of the Week honors.

DL Bryson Albright, Miami: The senior had seven tackles (2.5 for loss), two sacks and an interception in a 20-13 win at UMass for MAC East Division Defensive Player of the Week honors.

K Josiah Yazdani, Ohio: The senior made two field goals and six PATs in a 48-31 victory over Ball State for MAC East Division Special Teams Player of the Week honors.

RB Kareem Hunt, Toledo: The junior had 153 yards on 29 carries and two touchdowns in a 44-28 win over Bowling Green for MAC West Division Offensive Player of the Week honors.

LB Boomer Mays, Northern Illinois: The senior had 15 tackles and two pass breakups in a 27-19 win over Western Michigan for MAC West Division Defensive Player of the Week honors.

K Brian Eavey, Central Michigan: The junior made two field goals and three PATs in a 27-14 win at Kent State for MAC West Division Special Teams Player of the Week honors.



POPEYES BAHAMAS BOWL MEDIA PROJECTIONS

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

USA Today (Erick Smith) - Nov. 24:..... WKU vs. Toledo

SI.com (Zac Ellis) - Nov. 24:..... Old Dominion vs. Northern Illinois

FOXSports.com (Stuart Mandel) - Nov. 24:..... Louisiana Tech vs. Ohio

Athlon Sports (Steven Lissan) - Nov. 24:..... Middle Tennessee vs. Akron

Phil Steele Magazine (Phil Steele) - Nov. 24:..... Marshall vs. Northern Illinois

10thYearSeniors.com (John Marc Nutt) - Nov. 23:..... Middle Tennessee vs. Ohio

Nassau Tribune (Renaldo Dorsett) - Nov. 23:..... Louisiana Tech vs. Bowling Green

The Sporting News (Bill Bender) - Nov. 23:..... Southern Miss vs. Western Michigan

Bleacher Report (Bryan Fischer) - Nov. 23:..... WKU vs. Bowling Green

CollegeFootballNews.com (Pete Fiutak) - Nov. 23:..... Middle Tennessee vs. Akron

ESPN.com (Brett McMurphy) - Nov. 22:..... Marshall vs. Bowling Green

ESPN.com (Mark Schlabach) - Nov. 22:..... Marshall vs. Northern Illinois

SB Nation (Jason Kirk) - Nov. 22:..... Old Dominion vs. Ohio

CBSsports.com (Jerry Palm) - Nov. 22:..... Middle Tennessee vs. Akron

Orlando Sentinel (Brant Parsons) - Nov. 22:..... Marshall vs. Bowling Green

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.

VICTOR CRUZ (UMASS)



Current NFL wide receiver **Victor Cruz** was a star receiver and kick returner in his college career at UMass from 2007-09.

He finished fourth in UMass career receptions list with 131, and all but one of those catches in came in his junior and senior season. He was fifth all-time at UMass in career receiving yards with 1,958. He became the ninth UMass player with 100 career catches, and he was tied for 12th all-time at the school with 11 career receiving touchdowns.

As a senior in 2009, Cruz named first team CAA All-Conference, a College Sporting News Preseason third team All-American and a Consensus Draft Services Honorable Mention All-American. He ranked third in the CAA and 27th in the NCAA in receiving yards per game (78.9) with a team-best 868 yards in 11 games on 59 catches. He finished his college career with a 22-game reception streak.

In his junior season of 2008, Cruz was named a College Sporting News Honorable Mention All-American, and he earned first team CAA All-Conference honors. He led UMass in receiving with 71 catches for 1,064 yards and six touchdowns, and he became the sixth 1,000-yard receiver in a single season in UMass history.

He was signed as a undrafted free agent by the New York Giants in 2010.

Through 2014, he has 264 receptions (12th on the Giants' career list) for 3,963 yards (14th career) and 24 touchdowns (16th career). He has 18 games with at least 100 receiving yards, the second-highest total in team history. In four postseason games, he has caught 21 passes for 269 yards and 1 touchdown.

He was selected to the 2012 Pro Bowl, where he set a game record for receptions with 10.

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)

