

College Football Top 10: Picks to take to the bank

So I didn't pick Georgia or Ohio State!?!? How can I live with myself?

Well, look at it this way, the teams projected at the top of the polls at the beginning of the season rarely finish there. I mean we're talking once out of every five years at best. So I'm going another way.

Georgia's schedule is just way too tough to go with them, plus injuries to three of their starters doesn't help.

I really don't know how well Ohio State will fare this year either. I think there's a limit to the number of consecutive national championship games you can lose. If not, we may very well have found the Buffalo Bills of college football.

Although they are very talented, I just don't see the Buckeyes finish the season without stumbling a few times...including this coming weekend against USC...watch out!

1. Oklahoma- Anyone with the services of super cool and steady Sam Bradford as quarterback should like their chances. The freshman phenom from a year ago will be better than last year even, and that's one of the reasons I like OU to take the cake. Also back are running backs DeMarco Murray and Chris Brown. The tandem combined for 1,300 yards and 22 touchdowns a year ago. The scary thing, they both played BEHIND Allen Patrick. I really can't wait to

see them with the carries all to themselves. Also they return every receiver of note -- minus Malcolm Kelly -- Juaqu Iglesias who had over 900 yards and Jermai Gresham who had 11 receiving touchdowns. Everyone is talking up Georgia, USC, and Ohio State, but it's the team that nobody is talking about right now (at least for the national title) that I like. That won't last long...at the end of the year everyone will be talking about them.

2. Florida- Popular pick, wouldn't you think? Well when it comes to the championship picture, it's not.

People seem to forget that despite the fact that Tebow won the Heisman trophy last year, the Gators dropped four games. That won't happen this year. There might be one slip up, but I see the Gators making it all the way to the National Championship game. Of course, I think they'll lose, but there's really no shame in that. The Gators got playmakers Chris Rainey and former USC running back Emmanuel Moody in behind Tebow, and also returns all-everything player Percy Harvin (who could be the first overall selected in next year's NFL Draft). The Gators will be chomping down on opponents all season long.

3. Missouri- Chase Daniel is back and so is Jeremy Maclin. To be honest, that's all that needs to be said. The best news for them is

that they do not have to play Oklahoma in the regular season, but they will meet on Dec. 6 in Kansas City for the Big 12 Championship. If it were any other team they played there, I'd have to take Mizzou and then once again in the National Championship. But it's Oklahoma, and I don't see them getting past the Sooners. But I could be wrong. Either way, Mizzou is in for quite a season.

4. USC- The Trojans impressed most with their first-week beating of weakling

Virginia, but not me. Granted they played across the country, but I just don't see them being strong enough to prevent slip ups like the ones that controlled their destiny last year. I'm not saying they'll lose to Stanford, but they'll lose to somebody ... and maybe more than one somebody. They might be the most talented team in the nation, but talent doesn't always equal wins, or, in this case, winning it all. And these Trojans won't.

5. Georgia- I mean, do I have to say it? SUICIDE! The Georgia Bulldogs' schedule is SUICIDE! If they come out of it unscathed I will be more than impressed. In fact, it will at least throw their name into the ring of greatest all-time teams. They may have the most talented halfback in America, but they will lose at least one. They will be better than every team they play, but the

cumulative effect of playing such great teams week in and week out will be deflating.

6. Wisconsin

Allan Eridge will be the key to the Badgers' success or failure. The senior transfer quarterback from Kansas State can take second billing to running back P.J. Hill at the beginning, but he must step up and make some plays on his own if the Badgers are to beat Ohio State in a mid-season matchup in Camp Randall. I think they will, and they will be the representatives as the Big 10 Champ in the BCS game at the end of the year.

7. West Virginia

Despite an early setback to a pretty surprising ECU team, the Mountaineers will find a way to make it back into the top 10 by season's end. Though the defense has looked suspect, and they don't have an established receiver with the departure of Darrius Reynaud, they'll have plenty of time to iron things out. I mean they play in the Big East. Heavy doses of Pat White and Noel Devine will get the Mountaineers back on track.

8. Ohio State

Living with the reality of being a two-time loser of the National Championship game doesn't bode well with "The Ohio State" gang. Unfortunately the Buckeyes are going to have to be OK with that for a little while longer. They will be a great team, and possibly a BCS at large team,

By Chris Hatcher

but "The Ohio State University" is not going to be hoisting the Sears Trophy at the end of the year.

9. Wake Forest- This may be the

biggest surprise of this list for some people. But anyone who has watched this team play knows that they look a lot like the Wake team of two years ago that went BCS bowling. This year, I think they'll be just as good, or even better. Yes, the departure of Kenneth Moore hurts, but they will find playmakers. And quarterback Riley Skinner is one of the most composed passers in the nation. With an already weak ACC full of underachievers, I will take Wake Forest over the head cases from Clemson. That's not to say it won't be a tough road there, but it will be Wake's road all the way if they want it.

10. Texas Tech

Texas Tech, a school of accomplished college passers will have the best quarterback in their history lining up behind center this season in Graham Harrell. Unlike his predecessors, Harrell has an NFL career ahead of him. Also, it helps that the Red Raiders have returning receiver and last year's top freshman in all of college football Michael Crabtree. The defense has also apparently improved. I really think Texas Tech will break through the ceiling that has restrained them in past seasons.

Upcoming Events

Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues
11	12	13	14	15	16
Women's Soccer 4:00 pm Home v. Ferrum Women's Volleyball 7:00 pm Away @ Ferrum		Men's Football 1:00 pm Home v. Greensboro Women's Volleyball 2:00 pm Home v. Bridgewater*	Women's Soccer 5:00 pm Home v. Randolph* Men's Soccer 7:30 pm Home v. Warren Wilson		Women's Soccer 5:00 pm Home v. West Virginia Tech

Sports Opinion

The "Mega Trade" and its role in the future of the NBA

By Chris Hatcher

Everyone is in Boston Celtics mode. As the franchise triumphantly made their return to glory on June 17 with a 131-92 thumping of their archrival Los Angeles Lakers in the NBA Finals, certain truths became undeniable.

Contrary to the common belief that a team decides to try to surround a star player with a supporting cast and roll the dice, the mega trade requires more gall. It could work, or it could become a burning fiasco, and it's as unpredictable as the weather.

No one -- save the collective fan bases of their organizations -- could have distinguished the difference between a mega trade that sent Allen Iverson to Denver to pair with lethal youngster Carmelo Anthony and the one a year later that sent Ray Allen and Kevin Garnett to Paul Pierce's side and materialized into a championship.

In a world where bigger is better, and looking out for number one is almost considered virtuous, the "mega trade" will flourish. Seeing what Danny Ainge and Co. did to resurrect one of the most storied franchises in American sports via the mega trade after what was arguably their lowest low in fran-

chise history last year, has forced GM's, owners, coaches, scouts and especially players to take notice ... players, say, like Tracy McGrady who is now at the top of the list of players chasing their ring.

Those questions were brought to a shout during the first two rounds in the playoffs: Two rounds in which Boston required the maximum number (7) of games in each series to claim victory and advance to the Eastern Conference Finals ... and then on to the NBA Finals, where all questions were erased and answered in convincing fashion. The answer: mega trades can work!

In the world of sports, superstars take the cake. Nobody in the crowd is there to see the third-string quarterback -- save his family, that is there to love and support him, but even that gets old. They are there for the superstars.

There has always been a misconception about superstars. They cannot function together.

They are dysfunctional by nature. They are egotistical, self-centered, type-A personalities who struggle when their role as the supreme one is contested. While this all may be true, there is a decreasing number of old-school superstars who realize the need for a team dynamic and unity.

Boston certainly tapped that a la Kevin Garnett, and the team bought into it. Boy, did it pay its dividends.

We've determined that the mega trade will work, but the question is, will the mega trade always work? The answer is a resounding NO! In fact, it will fail probably about three times as often. General manager types see what Boston did as an opportunity, and neglect to remember that it was the team's unity and compatibility that took them to their highest heights. And that's why some of these mega trades won't work.

Based on their past history, we should have been able to say that A.I. and Carmelo would fail. People should have faced the facts that Shaq wouldn't resurrect the fading Suns, nor would Zach Randolph reinvigorate ten years worth of a mishandled organization. Minus the Carmello and A.I. deal, these were copycat maneuvers based on Boston's success.

And we have seen nothing but more and more of these trades in an attempt to become the next Boston.

Will Richard Jefferson help the Bucks leave the land of woe-franchises? Will Jermaine O'Neal return to form and make the Raptors the most dangerous set of bigs in the league? The jury's still out on those trades, and all the other moves as well, but the statistics are against them. But whatever the result, the art of trading has changed. Welcome mega trade.