

The 12 days of bowl games

The 12 days of Christmas are apparently being challenged by some stiff competition. Beginning on Dec. 19 and finishing on Jan. 8, bowl games will be played on approximately 12 different days. That's 12 days of wall-to-wall college football. Who has the time or the inclination to watch that many alleged championship games? It's crazy. How many championship teams can there actually be? The situation is not unlike a kindergarten class where everybody gets a prize so that nobody loses his or her self-esteem. What happened to the days when kids earned self-esteem because they actually accomplished something?

In the beginning of the bowl era, five major games were played within a day or so of Jan. 1, New Year's Day. We had the Rose Bowl, the Cotton Bowl, the Sugar Bowl, the Orange Bowl, and the Peach Bowl. All were named after things that could conceivably be put in bowls. The games were also played in bowl-shaped stadiums. The bowl theme put a little double entendre into play that changed the customary top prize of a cup into something different. I don't think I could stand another cup like the hockey top prize that was named after someone called Stanley. Why anyone would want to win a cup named Stanley is beyond my realm of comprehension. Besides, the Rose Cup or the Cotton Cup sounds funny. Anyway, the Gator Bowl was soon added to the mix, but even that exuded a certain amount of charm.

Now, we have a total of 35 different bowl games. That requires 70 teams. I'm surprised that the organizers didn't ask a few backup teams to stand by in case some teams weren't available due to previously made plans. You know how dependable college students can be. Some still attend classes instead of going to pep rallies. I hear that a few even study for finals — things like that.

Be serious folks! How can there be 70 championship teams? The first five bowls decided the championship team of each conference. Now to participate in a bowl game, teams must be voted the most popular amongst sports announcers or some such nonsense. They may as well just ask a group of village idiots to choose the teams by selecting their favorite uniform color schemes.



You can't beat a system you can't understand

By Sam Bari

This year, a few changes, additions and deletions make up the list of bowl games that includes a host of previously unknown participants. The Hula Bowl has been changed to the Hawaii Bowl and the Rice Bowl seems to have evaporated into the netherworld of historic non-events. And the sponsors are getting weirder every year. What's with the Chick-fil-A Bowl? I cannot imagine any team wanting to play in a chicken bowl. That's just embarrassing. Then we have the Capitol One Bowl. Why not just call it the Money Bowl and get it over with? And let's not forget the GMAC Bowl. That should be called the Debt Bowl, or some-

thing else just as dumb. These sponsors do not sound bowl-ish. The Tournament of Roses has some dignity to it. The Meineke Muffler Bowl does not.

What we really need is for American Standard or Koehler to get in on the action so they can sponsor the Toilet Bowl. The two teams with the most losses can play each other to decide on which team is the best of the worst.

If the trend continues, we'll soon have so many bowls that fans will be attending several games a day, moving from one bowl to the next like a traveling party. The practice could be called "Bowling." Now there's a sport that died with the hula-hoop. Why not borrow the term? Give it a little upgrade. Nobody will miss it. We could even go the extra mile and call it "Bowling for Dollars." That's what it's about, isn't it? Anyway, bowling, or whatever we're gonna call it is definitely part of that system we'll never understand.



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