THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

SPORTS

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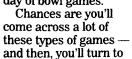
Bowl games lack importance, quality

By Brendan Monahan

V ifting through TV channels over Christmas break, the uDrove Humanitarian

Bowl might pop up. Taking place at Bronco Stadium in Boise, Idaho, a team from the MAC will face one from the WAC on Dec. 18, the first day of bowl games.

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the next station.

No one blames you. Most bowl games lack quality matchups, and other more interesting sporting events will be broadcast over the airwaves.

MY OPINION

Outside of the BCS contests and several others - including the Capital One Bowl postseason FBS games fade out of memory.

This season, Penn State's bowl could present the same dilemma.

Whichever game the Nittany Lions go to, a win could help reverse the trend of losing to ranked teams, and the young

players could gain confidence heading into the spring.

The extra practices leading into postseason matchups can also help a team improve

Bowls are in no way pointless for players

But from a fan's standpoint — outside of ranked matchups and BCS games — the postseason contests provide no real value. And from the perspective of pure sporting purpose, the only real game that matters is the Tostitos BCS National

Championship Game, which crowns a champion.

There are 35 bowls, meaning 70 of 120 Football Bowl Subdivision teams will play in bowl games — that's approximately 58 percent of the league playing in the postseason.

Could you imagine that percentage of NFL teams playing after the regular season?

That means about 18 teams — six more than the league's current format - would make the playoffs.

Could you fathom the MLB with the same percentage?

Currently eight clubs, four from each league, get into the postseason. If the MLB

"There are 35 bowls, meaning 70 of 120 Football Bowl Subdivision teams will play in bowl games - that's approximately 58 percent of the league playing in the postseason."

applied the same format as the FBS. approximately 17 teams would make the playoffs.

Not even college basketball, which now features a playoff of 68 schools, has that disproportional of a postseason.

In fact, Division I basketball has a lower percentage than all of the above. With 347 schools playing Division I basketball, about 19 percent of teams make the NCAA tournament.

Putting the bowl system into perspective, its importance shrinks and shrivels into irrelevance.

The Outback and Gator Bowls would be enticing for Penn State. Playing a team from the nation's best conference, the SEC, brings attention to the game, especially if featuring 2008 national champion Florida or Steve Spurrier's South Carolina, but there are no stakes on the game, no titles to be won.

Pride really wouldn't even be a factor. To

an outsider, the bowl game is fun to watch, yes. But it's more of a way to pass the time during the holiday season.

The Insight, Citor and Outback Bowls are filler games enticements before the real shows, such as the Granddaddy of Them All — otherwise known as the Rose Bowl - or the Sugar Bowl.

So while flipping around the TV on New Year's Day, you'll probably come across Penn State. This time, unlike for the uDrove Humanitarian Bowl, you'll probably keep it on.

The game beats one at Bronco Stadium in Boise. Idaho.

It beats a matchup between MAC and WAC schools, but like the percentage of postseason FBS contenders, the bowl just won't add up.

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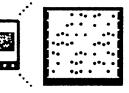
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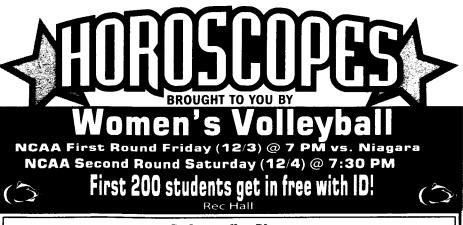
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By Jacqueline Bigar

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Friday, Dec. 3,

This year, much that comes to fruition stems from reflection and an innate thoughtfulness. Treasure your time alone, as it will give birth to many great ideas. You will remain more centered than in the past. Your domestic life proves to be a source of continual happi-ness. Many of you will move in new directions, buy new homes, add to your family or even live with someone for the first time. If you are single, romance blooms spring 2011. Know that this is a special period in which you could attract someone quite unique. If you contained attached, the two of you renew your vows in spirit in 2011, SCORPIO understands you

The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll 5-Dynamic Have 4-Positive: -Average: 2-So-so; 1-Difficult

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

 $\star \star \star \star$ Move through a problem decisively and firmly. Deal directly with the person who might be involved. Keep reaching out for others. Your sixth sens homes in on the bottom line once others share. Tonight: Choose a special restaurant or place. Be with a favorite person. TAURUS (April 20-May 20) **** Defer to others quickly.

Sometimes it is better that others take on more responsibility. A meeting or get-together proves to be a joyous occasion The unexpected hits with someone who is angry and demanding. Tonight: Just

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) t** Work with someone directly and

understand what is going on. A must

appearance could add pressure to a partnership. You might want to venture out without this person. A little nurturing could reverse this issue. Tonight: Don't push beyond your limits CANCER (June 21-July 22)

**** Keep reaching out for the a distance. Your ability to get past what others think are necessary steps might not always help. Streamline issues and root out the real problem behind the scenes. Tonight: Switch modes. Finie to

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

**** Express your feelings directly Your creativity will start to flourish it you are coming from your authentic self Those who relate on a one-on-one level with you respond positively to your resourceful ideas and conversations. Tonight: Not far from home VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) **** Your style can be efficient or

critical. If someone flees the scene when you are speaking about details, perhaps your efficiency has evolved to pickiness. Bring this issue up for discussion, and you'll gain the confidence of others. Tonight: Hang at a favorite haunt. LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

*** Center yourself and press forward Though at first you might be uncertain about a situation, you'll come up with great results. Yes, you have stamina and energy, but how much can you really take on? Remember, you also need to relax. Tonight: Do for yourself first. SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

 \star \star \star Simply follow what seems to be the best course. Your judgment is finetuned. The results you get from this typeof centering might blow you away. Touch base with a child or loved one. If

you are artistic, just let it happen Tonight. You deserve your reputation as

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) ★★★ Understand that not everything is meant to be shared or discussed. In fact, sometimes it is easier to let others tell you what they know or think. Helping them process could be more important Tonight: Keep it private. CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

 $\star \star \star \star$ Conversations lead you in a new direction. At first you could be jolted by internation that heads your way. Rethinl a situation, and zero in on what feels right: A conversation opens up a friend-ship or association. Tonight: TGIF. AOUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

 $\star \star \star$ Your stand and ability to handle a lot of responsibilities and understand an excess of information puts you in a position where you might not be comfortable Use your instincts and good sense with a money offer. Tonight: Could be a late

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) ★★★★★ Allow your imagination to sour. The more ideas that are substantiated by information that comes forward. the greater the choices. This statement might refer to something as simple as your weekend plans. Tonight: Take off if you can

BORN TODAY

Actress Daryl Hannah (1960), figure skater Katarina Witt (1965), novelist Joseph Conrad (1857)

Jacqueline Bigar is on the Internet at www.jacquelinebigar.com 2010 by King Features Syndicate In



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