

Pollspeak Report to the Associated Press

College Football 2007



Provided by

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Inside this volume of the Pollspeak Report is all of the research and reports created by Pollspeak during the course of the 2007 college football season. Section 1 contains an executive summary along with Pollspeak's general recommendations. Section 2 contains all of the supporting information.

Section 1

Executive Summary

First off, Pollspeak wants to commend the AP for its college football poll. We can honestly say it has the most integrity, transparency and is the most trustworthy of any college football poll. We can say this because the AP Poll is the only one that has public ballots every week. This is important because it allows us to examine the inner workings of the poll and shows that they have nothing to hide. In addition, the voters in the poll are all currently employed by respectable media outlets. This typically allows fans direct access to the people doing the voting. Many of the voters freely write columns and answer questions about their ballots. This is a refreshing contrast to the polls currently utilized by the BCS formula. It is also worth noting that the AP voters have been completely reliable during the course of the season...never missing a vote. Again, this is unlike other polls such as Harris Interactive. The AP organization is to be lauded for the steps it has taken to ensure college football enthusiasts have a poll they can understand and trust. That being said, there are issues that can still be addressed.

The first suggestion is to weed out bad voters on an annual basis. Like any organization, you are only as strong as your weakest link. By enacting a policy of reviewing and replacing voters each year, the AP Poll will strengthen its reputation. Pollspeak intends to help in this endeavor by providing some tools and information needed to do these reviews.

What is a bad voter? There is no easy answer to that. Pollspeak has its definitions as do our readers. The AP likely has its definitions as well. Those definitions should be published publicly and explained to voters when they apply. Right now voting is completely open ended, but some basic rules could help align the voters towards a common goal. The AP must determine these rules on their own, but some suggestions include:

- Rank the teams based on their performances up to this week. Do not try to predict the future, which is of course unknown. You will have time to change team rankings each week throughout the season based on their latest performances.
- Give ample weight to games played on the field. If two teams have similar records, and they have played each other already, generally rank the winner higher. This is a rule of thumb more than a definitive rule because other factors (such as injured players) can also be taken into consideration.

The means by which the AP determines bad voters are up to them. However, they should have a review process with public criteria. In the meantime, Pollspeak will provide the AP with its criteria (contained in this report) to help them. In summary, the following voters were rated the worst for the 2007 college football season:

Voter	Points
Jon Wilner	4.5
Scott Wolf	3
Craig James	2.5

We recommend that the AP look seriously at these voters and ideally remove them from next year's football poll. Jon Wilner and Scott Wolf are strong recommendations. Craig James is recommended to a lesser extent since our concerns with his voting lessened as the season progressed. Again, the details and explanation for the point system can be found in Section 2 of this report.

A final recommendation Pollspeak has for the AP concerns public relations. Again, we are big fans of the AP Poll. We know it has been running since 1936 and is therefore the most important poll for keeping historic records. We also know that a major reason the BCS was formed was to unite the AP Poll and the Coaches' Poll and help prevent split national championships. Now the two polls are split again and that possibility exists again. However, there is a general sentiment that the AP Poll is less important. Pollspeak encounters this regularly. The BCS brand name is very strong now, and many fans are no longer concerned about a split championship...thinking the BCS is the only one that matters. The AP can fix this perception problem in at least two ways:

- 1) Rejoin the BCS. Pollspeak would welcome the most transparent, honest and longest running poll back to the formula.
- 2) Compete with the BCS. Add computer rankings, create a formula, heavily market the poll and end the season with a very public award ceremony.

There are likely other options, but either way, Pollspeak will help support the efforts of the AP Poll, and we can only hope that the other polls will eventually follow their lead and make their ballots public and their voters more reliable and accessible. Only then can Pollspeak fully support them as well.

Section 2

Pollspeak began tracking AP ballots in week 7. Formatting in this document is an approximation of how it originally appeared on the web. To view the original information, see the Football section of Pollspeak: www.pollspeak.com.

Week 7

The Worst Voter of the Week Award goes to the person with the most concerning ballot. It may be due to a few major concerns, multiple minor concerns, or a combination of the two. Results will be tracked and sent to the governing bodies of each poll at season's end. New polls come out each Sunday during football season. You have until Wednesday morning to [Vote](#) and make your case on the [Forums](#). The results will be posted here Wednesday evening. Please note that voting is a quick way to voice your displeasure, but it is not the only measure used. Solid arguments made on the [Forums](#) can be even more valuable.



Week 7 WORST Voter -- Craig James (posted 10/10/07)

Craig James is a well known commentator for ESPN/ABC and previously CBS. He is generally very knowledgeable about pro and college football, having played his college ball at SMU and in the NFL for the Patriots. However, his [week 7 AP Poll Ballot](#) makes him this week's dubious winner. Some highlights from his ballot:

- 1) Michigan at #22 after a huge upset loss to a I-AA team and a blow out (39 - 7) by Oregon at home. Michigan is a team that has only beaten one team with a winning record, Penn State. And Penn State hasn't beaten any team with a winning record. Michigan is still unranked, which means James is in the minority. In fact, the only people to rank Michigan #22 or better are other ESPN employees - Kirk Herbstreit and Chris Fowler. Fowler is actually the most generous, putting the Wolverines at #18. It's enough to make Pollspeak wonder if ESPN has a big Michigan game on the horizon.
- 2) USC at #6 after losing to one of the worst teams in I-A, Stanford. Many people consider this the greatest upset in CFB history. The other people think Michigan's opening loss to 1-AA Appalachian State is the greatest (see #1 above). 8 pollsters ranked USC #6 or better.
- 3) Virginia Tech unranked. James is the ONLY voter to not include Virginia Tech on his ballot. The Hokies are currently ranked 12 in the AP Poll, but James feels they are unworthy of a place anywhere in the top 25.
- 4) Florida State unranked. James is not alone on this one, but definitely in the minority. 55 of the 64 ballots available for viewing rank FSU. The only reason this is a red flag is because he ranks a two-loss Michigan team (see #1 above), a two-loss Rutgers team (beaten by unranked Maryland), and a one-loss Texas Tech who has only beaten one team with a winning record (UTEP). All of these teams are unranked in the latest poll.

5) He ranks two-loss Kansas State #20 and ranks two-loss Texas #16. K State beat Texas...badly. Also, the only team Texas has beaten with a winning record is UCF and they were lucky to win that one by a field goal.

6) Big 12 Bias. James ranks 6 Big 12 teams in the top 25. This equals the amount of SEC teams he ranks. By comparison he only ranks 1 ACC team. James is alone in this ratio.

There are several other items that could be pointed out, but these six are the highlights. We'll let you discuss the rest on our [FORUMS](#).



Good Voter of the Week -- Week 7

Kudos to CNN/SI's **Stewart Mandel** for having the courage to totally redo his ballot after the last two Saturdays of carnage in college football. Mandel wrote an article explaining his decision to do this and went so far as to omit his past week's rankings due to their irrelevance. See his article on the topic here: [LINK](#)

Week 8**Week 8 WORST Voter -- Craig James, ABC (posted 10/17/07)**

Craig James is a well known commentator for ESPN/ABC and previously CBS. He is generally very knowledgeable about pro and college football, having played his college ball at SMU and in the NFL for the Patriots. However, his week 8 [AP Poll Ballot](#) makes him this week's dubious winner for the second week running. Some highlights from his ballot:

- 1) Pollspeak and its voters aren't always going to agree on who is the week's worst, but in this case we do. James received over 700 votes mostly, it seems, from people baffled that he would rank Kentucky #24 after they defeated consensus #1 LSU. Most voters have Kentucky in the top 10. James ranked Kentucky by far the lowest of any voter. There is usually a cattle prod that separates the Worst Voter from the pack, and James' Kentucky ranking is this week's shocker. Similar to how James surprised us [last week](#) by leaving Virginia Tech completely off the ballot.
- 2) Boston College ranked #10 and Arizona State ranked #13. This is the lowest ranking for BC by any voter. True, BC hasn't played a tough schedule, but neither has Ohio State (James' #1). When looking at these two teams without bias, they should be ranked closer together...either high or low, but they are in similar circumstances. James also has the widest margin between Ohio State and BC. The same argument could be made for Arizona State (James' #13), which has had arguably the toughest schedule of the three. James is not alone with his ranking of the Sun Devils, but Pollspeak doesn't see enough difference between these three teams to rank them so widely apart.
- 3) Note how he ranks head to head match ups of teams with similar records: Texas over Kansas State, Florida over Auburn (by a wide margin), Oregon over California. In each case the winner of the match up is ranked lower. This is not uncommon among voters, though. See the Good Voter of the Week section below for more details about this.
- 4) Hawaii is unranked. This is almost nit-picking by comparison. Seven other voters agree with James, and the Warriors have needed 2 overtime wins against unranked teams. However, the omission was worth mentioning (at least by Hawaii fans).
- 5) Equally nit-picky: He is only one of six voters to rank Rutgers. However, he is the only one to rank them over Kentucky.

There are other items that could be pointed out, but these are the highlights. We'll let you discuss the rest on our [FORUMS](#).



Week 8 DIS-honorable Mention -- Tommy Trujillo, The New Mexican (posted 10/17/07)

- 1) On his [week 8 ballot](#), Trujillo ranks Connecticut #19. Trujillo is alone on ranking UConn, let alone giving them a lofty #19. Yes, everyone is entitled to their opinion, but if one were to rank UConn, you would also expect him to rank the one-loss team that just beat them (Virginia). He didn't.
- 2) He ranks Boston College #1 while ranking Arizona State #12. Two issues here: Trujillo is the only person to rank BC #1. Although this isn't the consensus, that alone doesn't merit a concern. Which of the two teams is better is debatable, but as stated in Craig James issue #3 above, both of these teams are in similar circumstances. Ranking them this far apart shows significant bias.
- 3) Like James, Trujillo consistently ranks the loser of head-to-head match ups (with similar records) over the winner. Texas over Kansas State (unranked), Florida over Auburn, Oregon over California.
- 4) More importantly, he picked the bad combination of: South Carolina (5) - LSU (9) - Kentucky (16). See the Good Voter of the Week section below for further explanation. In short, the winner of the head-to-head match up is more likely to be behind the person they beat with this type of ranking, and the three teams aren't even ranked close to each other. Kentucky's #16 ranking also happens to be their worst rank aside from Craig James rank of #24. Only one other voter ranked them #16.
- 5) A nit-pick worth mentioning: Tujillo ranked Cincinnati #13. We have no issue with ranking the Bearcats, but #13 is the highest of any voter.

There are other items that could be pointed out, but these are the highlights. We'll let you discuss the rest on our [FORUMS](#).



Quick Hits From Around the Country (posted 10/17/07)

[Rich Kaipust](#), Omaha World-Herald -- ranks West Virginia #2 while he ranks the South Florida team that beat them #5. Also ahead of South Florida is Virginia Tech at #3. He alone gave the Hokies their highest ranking.

[Mike DeArmond](#), Kansas City Star -- is the only voter to rank FSU...and at #20, instead of ranking similar teams that beat the Noles such as Wake Forest and Clemson.

[Jon Wilner](#), San Jose Mercury News -- kept LSU #1 even after the loss. He was alone in this choice. South Carolina is his #2, which is their highest rank (one other voter agreed).

[Austin Ward](#), Casper (WY) Star-Tribune -- is the lone voter with Oklahoma at #1. LSU is his #2 and he is the only voter to rank BYU (#24).

[Adam Van Brimmer](#), Savannah GA Morning News -- gets the Underdog Award. He is the only voter to rank Troy (#25) and Air Force (#22). He also gives Boise State their highest ranking (#19) and Hawaii their highest ranking (#9, one other voter agreed). He and one other voter also ranked Virginia #18 (only one voter ranked them higher at #17).

[Neal McCready](#), Mobile Press-Register -- is the lone voter to rank Arizona State #1. Pollspeak is not implying this is a bad choice. Just pointing it out as unique.

[Mike Prater](#), Idaho Statesman & [Myron Patton](#), KOKH-TV Oklahoma City -- are the only two to give South Florida its lowest ranking (#7).

There are other items that could be pointed out, but these are the highlights. We'll let you discuss the rest on our [FORUMS](#).



GOOD Voter of Week 8 -- Chip Cosby, Lexington Herald and Joe Hawk, Las Vegas Review-Journal (posted 10/17/07)

Typically we only pick one Good Voter of the Week. However, we picked two this week to illustrate a point. [Joseph Hawk's](#) and [Chip Cosby's](#) week 8 ballots are exercises in poll voter Rule #1. In reality, there are no official rules for voters, but if there were, Rule #1 might state: If two teams have a similar record, and they have played each other, rank the winner of the head-to-head match up higher. After all, this is usually the first tie breaker for conference rankings. While this rule might not always make sense (like all rules, there are exceptions), and in some multi-team cases may be impossible, it is a good rule of thumb. Cosby and Hawk seem to follow it best this week. Note the following series:

Hawk:

- Kansas State = #18, Texas = #20
- Auburn = #15, Florida = #16,
- California = #12, Oregon = #14
- Kentucky = #4, LSU = #5, South Carolina = #6

Cosby:

- Kansas State = #23, Texas = #25
- Auburn = #14, Florida = #15
- California = #10, Oregon = #11
- South Carolina = #5, Kentucky = #6, LSU = #7

There are other match ups (also ranked properly), but these are the highlights. Note that in every case of a simple head-to-head match up, they ranked the winner higher. If you check other ballots, you will find this to be the exception more than the rule. The only place Cosby and Hawk differ is with South Carolina, Kentucky and LSU because each team has one round-robin win. This is where voters have to use their best judgment. Typically there are three configurations that make sense in this situation and three that don't:

Makes Sense: (only 1 team is out of order based on 3-way, head-to-head)

- 1) Kentucky, LSU, South Carolina
- 2) LSU, South Carolina, Kentucky
- 3) South Carolina, Kentucky, LSU

Doesn't Make Sense: (2 teams are out of order based on 3-way, head-to-head)

- 1) LSU, Kentucky, South Carolina
- 2) South Carolina, LSU Kentucky
- 3) Kentucky, South Carolina, LSU

More impressively, Cosby and Hawk also enforced Sub-Rule #1a, which states: When each team has a similar record and a round robin win over each other, rank all teams relatively near each other. To their credit, both voters did this.

Again, Pollspeak isn't saying that following Rule #1 mindlessly makes a ballot perfect. There are plenty of other considerations. (i.e. Some fans won't like Cosby ranking Oklahoma #3.) However, we feel that both ballots are very solid overall, and we respect their consistent use of Rule #1.

Discuss Good Voters of the Week on our [FORUMS](#).

Week 9**Week 9 WORST Voter -- Adam Van Brimmer, Savannah Morning News
(posted 10/24/07)**

[Last Week](#), Brimmer was given the Underdog Award in the Quick Hits section. This was basically a warning shot across the bow, but unfortunately Brimmer did not take evasive action. Here are some highlights from his [week 9 Ballot](#):

1) Brimmer gives Hawaii its highest ranking of any human or computer. Placing Hawaii at #7, Brimmer seems to put too much faith in the Warriors undefeated record. Looking at any other measure (i.e. who they've played and how they've won) would lead most voters to rank them much lower. Hawaii has needed two overtime wins against Louisiana Tech and San Jose State (neither has a winning record) to stay undefeated. Even more damning is Hawaii's schedule. Anderson Hester ranks their schedule 119 (as low as they track) and Sagarin ranks their schedule a horrendous 171...in other words, worse than many IAA schools. On that note, the computers also rank Hawaii much lower in general (see Computer Round-Up below). You can't rely on computer rankings alone, but when the computers rank undefeated teams so low, there is a concern.

2) Arizona State is ranked #13. This actually doesn't stand on its own as a major issue, but is more related to #1. If Hawaii is #7 based on its undefeated record, why would Arizona State be #13? By comparison, the Sun Devil's schedule is ranked #48 by Anderson Hester and #60 by Sagarin. Also concerning is the distance between Ohio State (#1) / Boston College (#2) and Arizona State (#13). All of these teams (including Kansas) are in a similar situation and should be ranked fairly close together when viewed without bias. However, Brimmer is not the only voter with this issue.

3) He is the only voter to rank Troy (again). Troy has only beaten one team with a winning record, Oklahoma State. That is a pretty impressive win compared to the rest of their schedule. However, no other voters think the Trojans should even be ranked, let alone ranked over Georgia, Auburn or Cal, as Brimmer does.

4) He gives Air Force their highest ranking at #17. In fact, Air Force received only one other vote at #25. Pollspeak (and most of the computers) agree with Brimmer that Air Force should be ranked higher than Troy, but nobody else agrees they should be that high.

5) Brimmer gives Connecticut its highest ranking at #20 and Boise State their highest ranking at #16. Pollspeak doesn't think these rankings merit concern on their own, but when taken in total, Brimmer seems to have an underdog bias or (excluding UConn) a non-BCS team bias. This is certainly uncommon among voters.

There are other items that could be pointed out, but these are the highlights. We'll let you discuss the rest on our [FORUMS](#).



**Week 9 DIS-honorable Mention -- Scott Wolf, Los Angeles Daily News
(posted 10/24/07)**

Scott Wolf was actually this week's top vote getter on Pollspeak. However, the votes were much more evenly distributed this week so we will keep this one short and make many small observations in the Quick Hits section below. Here are some highlights from [Wolf's week 9 ballot](#).

1) Wolf ranks Arizona State #15, which is the lowest of any voter. As mentioned above, Ohio State, Boston College, Arizona State and Kansas are all in the same boat...and it's a boat only big enough for a few teams. When making unbiased decisions, these four should be floating right near each other. Of course, if a ballot was the Titanic, then it would be OK for first-class passengers to get in the lifeboats instead.

2) Texas at #12. Wolf gives the highest ranking for Texas. While this is notable, it wouldn't qualify as a concern except when combined with #1... two-loss Texas ranked over undefeated Arizona State and undefeated Kansas (#13).

3) The third concern is a general tendency to rank losers of head-to-head match-ups over winners. See the explanation of Rule #1 from [last week](#). Wolf ranks Cal over UCLA, Kentucky over South Carolina, Alabama over Georgia, and West Virginia over South Florida. Wolf isn't alone in doing some of these, and one could make good cases for some of those decisions, but the fact that the loser is ranked higher in every case is concerning. The WVU and South Florida rankings seem like an obvious error...but several voters still agree with Wolf. Pollspeak theorizes that these rankings sometimes happen because people feel obligated to only move teams up or down a certain number of spaces each week instead of re-addressing the entire ballot each week. That causes some strange rankings of teams with the same record, but with winners ranked behind losers. Cal over UCLA was another common one. Also, Wolf not only put two-loss Georgia behind two-loss Alabama (who Georgia beat), but he also put them behind three-loss Auburn.

There are other items that could be pointed out, but these are the highlights. We'll let you discuss the rest on our [FORUMS](#).



Computer Round-Up (posted 10/24/07)

Computer Round-Up is a quick look at the computer polls; particularly where they disagree with the human polls or with each other.

1) The computers generally like Virginia. The human polls rank Virginia -- Harris = #20, AP = #21, Coaches' = #18. 3 of the 5 computer polls (Colley, Wolfe & Massey) have Virginia at #6. Anderson Hester has Virginia ranked #8. And the remaining two (Sagarin & Billingsley) are in line with the human polls (#22 & #17).

2) The computers generally don't like USC. The human polls rank USC -- Harris = #7, AP = #9, Coaches' = #8. The computers on the other hand rank them considerably lower -- Colley = #24, Sagarin = #24, Wolfe = #23, Massey = #26, Anderson Hester #14. Billingsley is the only one who disagrees and ranks USC at #4.

3) Only one computer thinks Hawaii is a top 25 team. Wolfe rates them #17. The next best ranking is Anderson Hester at #31. Colley has them unranked, and Massey has them at #68. Two overtime wins and one of the weakest schedules in the country is the reason for the lack of digital respect.

4) The computers generally like Connecticut. In fact, they like them enough that they are ranked #23 in the BCS standings...even though they didn't crack the top 25 in any human poll. Only one computer poll didn't like them (Billingsly = #41). The rest have them ranked in the top 20.

5) The computers generally like Wake Forest, but not enough to crack the BCS standings. Only one computer poll didn't place them in the top 25 (Sagarin= #28). Billingsly has them ranked #21. The rest have them ranked in the top 20.

6) Massey seems to really like the ACC with: Virginia #6, Wake Forest #15, Georgia Tech #23, and Maryland #24.

7) Sagarin ranks Kansas as the #2 team.

There are other items that could be pointed out, but these are the highlights. We'll let you discuss the rest on our [FORUMS](#).



[Rich Kaipust](#), Omaha World-Herald -- last week ranked West Virginia #2 while he ranked the South Florida team that beat them #5. He addressed that this week by dropping South Florida to #9 after their loss to Rutgers...even though they now have the same record, and South Florida won the head-to-head. Still ahead of South Florida is Virginia Tech at #5 He gave the Hokies their highest ranking along with one other voter.

[Neal McCready](#), Mobile Press-Register -- is the lone voter to rank Arizona State #1 for the second week in a row. Pollspeak is not implying this is a bad choice. Just pointing it out as unique. However, the fact that he has Kansas, who is in a similar situation, ranked #11 is a concern.

[Craig James](#), ABC -- gives Boston College its lowest ranking (#7).

[John Moredich](#), Tucson (AZ) Citizen -- is one of only four voters to rank Clemson, and he ranks them highest at #16. He is also the only voter to rank Texas A&M (#25).

[Brian Landman](#), St. Petersburg (FL) Times -- gives Kansas its lowest ranking (#20).

[Steve Conroy](#), Boston Herald -- ranks West Virginia #4 and South Florida #15. Although neither one is the most extreme ranking, the differential between the two (11) is largest margin for the loser to be ahead of the winner in this head-to-head match-up.

[Kirk Herbstreit](#), WBNS-AM Columbus (ESPN) -- is one of only two voters to rank Oklahoma State. He ranks them the highest at #24.

[Glenn Guilbeau](#), Gannett Louisiana and [Mike Prater](#), Idaho Statesman -- both give Florida their highest ranking of #4. Both ranked the Gators higher than some undefeated BCS teams but lower than others. Pollspeak is unsure why they separate the unbeaten (who all appear relatively equal on paper and who don't have common opponents) with one loss teams.

[Austin Ward](#), Casper (WY) Star-Tribune -- gives Alabama its highest ranking (#13). He is also one of two people to rank BYU. He ranks them highest at #21.

[Jon Wilner](#), San Jose (Calif.) Mercury -- gives Ohio State its lowest ranking at #5.


[Tommy Trujillo](#), The New Mexican -- was one of the few people to rank UConn last week and yet he dropped them from his rankings this week after their major victory over Louisville. In their place, he ranked Fresno State #23...the only person to rank them.

[Molly Yanity](#), Seattle Post-Intelligence -- only voter to rank Cincinnati (#25).

[Steve Batterson](#), Quad City (IA) Times -- only voter to rank Purdue (#25).

[Mike Strain](#), Tulsa (OK) World -- only voter to rank Tennessee (#23). The only team with a loss to receive #1 votes is LSU. They received five #1 votes in the AP Poll and two #1 votes in the Harris Interactive Poll.

There are other items that could be pointed out, but these are the highlights. We'll let you discuss the rest on our [FORUMS](#).



GOOD Voter of Week 9 -- Bret Bloomquist, El Paso Times (posted 10/24/07)

[Bret Bloomquist](#) gets the nod for Good Voter of the Week. Aside from having no major concerns, he does a good job of showing little bias between the four undefeated teams (with similar schedules):

- Ohio State = #1
- Boston College = #2
- Arizona State = #4
- Kansas = #6

This is one of the tightest groupings of these four teams amongst all the voters. Bloomquist also did a good job of ranking the winners of head-to-head matchups over the losers:

- South Florida = #7, West Virginia = #11
- Georgia = #21, Alabama = unranked
- South Carolina = #14, Kentucky = #16
- Michigan = #22, Penn State = #23
- Virginia = #20, Connecticut = #25

The only place he didn't follow through was with California (#18) over UCLA (unranked). However, people could (and have) make the point that UCLA lost to inferior teams and deserve to be ranked lower. In the end though, Cal lost to UCLA and that's the best opportunity a team has to "prove it on the field."

PollSpeak asserts that when teams have a similar record, unbiased voters give these match-ups more weight than abstract statistics and hypothetical "what ifs" and "could-have-been's."

Discuss Good Voters of the Week on our [FORUMS](#).

Week 10
Week 10 WORST Voter -- Jon Wilner, San Jose Mercury News (posted 10/31/07)

Jon Wilner is this week's top vote-getter on Pollspeak, which was a deciding factor over runner up, Austin Ward. Wilner has [a column](#) explaining his AP Ballot. He seems to put a lot of thought into it, even considering home vs. away games. However, that didn't stop people from disagreeing with him. Here are the highlights from his [week 10 ballot](#):

- 1) Wilner seems to have upset the most Buckeye fans. His #5 ranking for Ohio State is the lowest. He also ranks Arizona State #10, which is the second lowest. ([Last week's](#) DIS-honorable Mention, Scott Wolf, is the only voter to rank them lower at #11.) However, Wilner's differential between the two teams (5) is actually pretty average. He explains his reasoning in his [column](#).
- 2) In place of the typical undefeated teams, Wilner places once-beaten LSU and Oregon in the #1 and #2 spots. Two others agree with him on LSU and four others agree with Oregon.
- 3) His other votes on the edge include: Georgia -- with its highest ranking of #8, West Virginia -- with its lowest ranking of #9 (four others agree), and Florida -- with its highest ranking of #11 (two others agree). Pollspeak isn't making judgments about the quality of these picks. Although the quantity of his extreme picks is a concern.
- 4) SEC bias? Wilner is in the top 10% of rankings for nearly all SEC teams: LSU, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, Tennessee and Kentucky. Alabama (#16) is the only one where he is at least a bit closer to the consensus.
- 5) We'll consider breaking [Rule #1](#) a minor infraction at this point since it is both controversial, and it is getting harder to track as the season goes on. Still, Wilner ranked South Carolina over Tennessee, and Florida over Auburn even though those teams have the same number of losses (3). He also ranked South Florida (#14) significantly over Connecticut (#23) even though UConn only has one loss to USF's two, and UConn won the head-to-head.

There are other items that could be pointed out, but these are the highlights. We'll let you discuss the rest on our [FORUMS](#).


Week 10 DIS-honorable Mention -- Austin Ward, Casper Star-Tribune (posted 10/31/07)

Like Wilner, Ward publishes an article about his AP Ballot. Of course, it's written for entertainment as well as education, but it does give you some insight into what he was thinking. Read his article [HERE](#). Highlights from his [week 10 Ballot](#) include:

1) Ward ranks New Mexico. He is the only voter to rank them at all, and he checks them in at #22. No computer has them ranked near the top 25 and the computers that rank schedules place New Mexico's between 82 and 101. 6-2 New Mexico did beat respectable Air Force and Wyoming teams, but nothing about New Mexico screams top 25 yet, and unfortunately for them, their schedule doesn't include any more top 25 teams to help their cause.

2) Probably not a coincidence, but one of New Mexico's losses came from BYU, whom Ward also ranks. Five voters did rank BYU, but Ward gives them their highest ranking at #17. Again, 5-2 BYU is lacking what most voters would consider a signature win to be ranked so high at #17. Of course, for Ward, that signature win could be New Mexico.

3) By adding two less-popular teams to his ballots, something had to give. In this case, Ward is the only voter to leave 6-2 USC off of his ballot completely. He is also one of seven voters to leave USF off his ballot.

4) Ward gives West Virginia its lowest ranking at #9 (tied with four others), Texas its lowest ranking at #25 (tied with one other), Alabama its highest ranking at #11 (tied with one other), and is one of only two people to rank Arizona State #1. None of these alone is cause for concern, but in total, seven extreme votes are...well...extreme.

5) As with Wilner, we'll consider breaking [Rule #1](#) a minor infraction at this point. Ward ranked Florida over Auburn, and Tennessee over Cal (as most did) even though all teams have the same number of losses (3). He also ranked Auburn over USF even though USF only has two losses and won the head-to-head. As mentioned, he has USF unranked.

There are other items that could be pointed out, but these are the highlights. We'll let you discuss the rest on our [FORUMS](#).



Computer Round-Up (posted 10/31/07)

Computer Round-Up is a quick look at the computer polls; particularly where they disagree with the human polls or with each other.

1) The computers generally like South Florida. The human polls rank USF -- Harris = #20, AP = #20, Coaches' = #21. Two of the computer polls (Sagarin & Massey) have USF in the top 10. Colley has them ranked #11, Wolfe #12 and Anderson Hester #14. The lowest ranking is Billingsley at #19.

2) The computers generally don't like Wisconsin. The human polls rank the Badgers -- Harris = #21, AP = #26, Coaches' = #19. However no computer ranks them in the top 25 -- Colley = unranked, Sagarin = #47, Wolfe = #41, Massey = #42, Anderson Hester #30. Billingsley comes closest with a #26 ranking that matches the AP Poll.

3) The Hawaii watch remains the same. Only one computer thinks Hawaii is a top 25 team. Wolfe still rates them best at #14. The next best ranking is Anderson Hester at #33. Colley has them unranked, and Massey has them at #55. Two overtime wins and one of the weakest schedules in the country is the reason for the lack of digital respect.

4) Clemson and Wake Forest are fighting for ACC mindshare with the pollsters. Both are ranked in the top 25 by every computer except one (Anderson Hester has Clemson #27 as the only exception), but the AP is the only human poll to rank both. The Coaches like Clemson while Harris voters like Wake.

5) Sagarin now ranks Kansas as the #1 team. It also dislikes Boston College the most (#7). The other computers have BC ranked either #1 or #2. The other computers have Kansas ranked mostly #4 or #6, with Billingsley the lowest at #8.

6) The computers and pollsters generally agree that Michigan falls in the #14 - #20 range. However, Billingsley loves the Wolverines and ranks them #7. (Note: this is likely due to Billingsley not including IAA teams in its ratings.)

There are other items that could be pointed out, but these are the highlights. We'll let you discuss the rest on our [FORUMS](#).



The whole ESPN crew ([Chris Fowler](#), [Kirk Herbstreit](#) and [Craig James](#)) -- have Boston College ranked lowest in the country. Fowler and Herbstreit are two of the five who ranked BC lowest at #6 and James is tied with four others who rank BC #5.

[Adam Van Brimmer](#), Savannah Morning News -- still has Hawaii (#8), Troy (#20) and Boise State (#11) ranked highest in the country. He also has BYU ranked second highest (#19) only behind Austin Ward above. See [last week's Worst Voter of the Week](#) section for more info on Brimmer. He is only one of two people not to rank Virginia Tech (along with [Alex Abrams](#)) He will continue to stay on Pollspeak's radar.

[Scott Wolf](#), Los Angeles Daily News -- may be another perennial voter on the list. See [last week's DIS-honorable Mention](#) section for more info on Wolf. He still has Arizona State lowest of any ballot (#11) as well as the largest differential between Ohio State (#1) and Arizona State. He also has Kentucky (#15), Texas (#8) and Oklahoma (#3) ranked highest. Although nine others agree about the Sooners.

[Rich Kaipust](#), Omaha World-Herald -- is the only voter to do it twice in one week. That is ranking a winning team behind the loser of a head-to-head match-up, when the loser has a WORSE record. He has Rutgers over Cincinnati, and South Florida over Connecticut. He is actually the only voter to rank Rutgers (#25). He also gives West Virginia their highest ranking (#2).

[Neal McCready](#), Mobile Press-Register -- Big 10 bias? McCready gave the highest rankings to both Purdue (#18) and Illinois (#23). Only one voter ranked Wisconsin (#16) higher than him, and only two voters ranked Michigan (#11) higher than him (however, 8 voters agreed).

[John Moredich](#), Tucson (AZ) Citizen -- gives Clemson (#14) its highest ranking. He even went so far as to rank them higher than Virginia Tech (#16), who has the same record and beat Clemson soundly in the head-to-head match-up.

[Kirk Herbstreit](#), WBNS-AM Columbus (ESPN) -- in addition to his BC ranking, he is the only voter to put Oklahoma State (#21) on his ballot. He ranks them over Texas A&M and Troy...two teams with better records, but who beat Oklahoma State in head to head match-ups. He also gives Auburn their highest ranking (#10) and puts them well ahead of South Florida (#22), who once again has a better record and beat Auburn.

[Glenn Guilbeau](#), Gannett Louisiana -- gives California (#13) and Virginia Tech (#6) their highest rankings. He also gives Oklahoma (#8) its lowest ranking (2 others agreed).

[Mike Prater](#), Idaho Statesman -- gives USC its highest ranking (#8) and Kansas its lowest (#11). Because of this he also has the largest differential between Ohio State and Kansas (10)...two undefeated teams with

similar strength of schedule. (Ohio State does have stronger SOS according to the computers...but they are not far enough apart to warrant the 10 ranking difference.)

[Tommy Trujillo](#), The New Mexican -- gave Boston College its lone #1 vote.

[Tom Keegan](#), Lawrence Journal World -- is the only voter to rank UCLA, and he ranked them an impressive #15. He also ranked USC second-highest (#10). One thing is for sure, Keegan loves L.A.

[Mike DeArmond](#), Kansas City Star -- Ranks Missouri highest at #6, while ranking LSU (#7) and West Virginia (#9 along with four others) their lowest.

LSU lost its only two #1 votes in the Harris Interactive poll and also lost two in the AP poll (leaving three #1 votes there). Oregon is the only other one-loss team to receive a #1 vote. They received a #1 vote in the Coaches' poll.

There are other items that could be pointed out, but these are the highlights. We'll let you discuss the rest on our [FORUMS](#).



GOOD Voter of Week 10 -- Kirk Bohls, Austin American Statesman (posted 10/31/07)

[Kirk Bohls](#) is the latest Good Voter of the Week. First, he shows little bias between the four undefeated teams (with similar schedules):

- Ohio State = #1
- Boston College = #2
- Arizona State = #6
- Kansas = #7

It isn't the highest & tightest grouping (that honor goes to [Bret Bloomquist](#)), but it is certainly within a reasonable range.

The main reason we singled Bohls out; however, is that he really put a lot of thought into sorting out the convoluted SEC. He is one of the very few who made all of these choices:

- Georgia = #13, Alabama = #16
- Tennessee = #19, South Carolina = #23
- South Carolina = #23, Kentucky = #24
- Auburn = #12, Florida = #18
- Florida = #18, Tennessee = #19
- Florida = #18, Kentucky = #24

Alabama and Georgia have two losses and are ranked highest (with Georgia on top since they won the head-to-head). All the rest have three losses and are ranked with the winner of the head-to-head match-up ranked ahead of the loser. This is no easy feat with so many combinations.

His ballot isn't "perfect" (if there were such a thing). Michigan's rivals might complain they are too high. Oklahoma fans will complain they are too low. USF and Cal fans will complain that they should be over teams they beat. However, Bohls is being rewarded for really taking into account how the actual games played out a MAJORITY of the time and making major ballot changes when necessary. This is not the norm for AP voters.

Week 11

Week 11 WORST Voter -- Scott Wolf, Los Angeles Daily News (posted 11/7/07)

Scott Wolf was our DIS-honorable mention from [Week 9](#). It took two weeks of hard work, but he finally made it to the top of the list. Here are the highlights from his [week 11 ballot](#), which has more scarlet than a Nebraska - Rutgers game:

- 1) Uniquely Wolf: He gives Texas their highest ranking at #7 and Kansas its lowest at #9. Aside from the fact that Wolf is the extreme in both cases, the placement in regards to each other is strange. Forget that Texas has two losses to Kansas' zero losses for a moment. These teams have had three common opponents: Baylor, Nebraska and Kansas State. Texas lost to K-State. Kansas won. Texas beat Baylor 31 - 10. Kansas beat them 58 - 10. Texas beat Nebraska 28 - 25. Kansas beat them 76 - 39. Pollspeak is unsure how Wolf could think Texas should be ranked higher than Kansas at this point in the season.
- 2) Wolf also gave Kentucky its highest ranking at #14, Florida its highest ranking at #11, and Oklahoma its highest ranking at #2. Pollspeak is not saying that these teams are unworthy of the rankings; however, it isn't a good sign when your champion has a pattern of multiple extreme picks.
- 3) Aside from Kansas, he also gives Oregon its lowest ranking at #5, Connecticut its second lowest at #25 (only our DIS-Honorable mention is lower), and is only one of six voters to leave Clemson off the ballot completely. Also noteworthy, he is only one of three to not rank Clemson, but who does rank Florida State (a team with a worse record that Clemson beat).

There are other items that could be pointed out, but these are the highlights. We'll let you discuss the rest on our [FORUMS](#).



Week 11 DIS-honorable Mention -- Dave Morrison, The Register Herald (Beckley, WV) (posted 11/7/07)

It was a close call between Morrison and Wolf this week. In the end, Morrison took second place. Highlights from his [week 11 Ballot](#) include:

- 1) Morrison does not rank Connecticut. He is the only voter to not rank the Huskies. UConn is a team that really polarizes the nation, with a highest ranking of #8 vs. Morrison's snub. This is similar to Virginia Tech with the same spread (#8 - unranked). However, the worst is Hawaii (#6 - unranked). Details about these appear in the Quick Hits section below.
- 2) Like Wolf, Morrison is one of only three voters to rank Florida State, but not to rank Wake Forest or Clemson (teams with the same/better record and a victory over FSU).

3) Morrison is the only voter to rank South Carolina at all -- and at #20. This is over Arkansas, who has a better record and just beat the Gamecocks.

4) He also gives Tennessee its highest ranking at #12, which is higher than the three teams with the same record that beat the Volunteers: Alabama, Florida and California. You could certainly make a case for one or two of these being lower, but dropping all three seems drastic.

There are other items that could be pointed out, but these are the highlights. We'll let you discuss the rest on our [FORUMS](#).



Computer Round-Up (posted 11/7/07)

Computer Round-Up is a quick look at the computer polls; particularly where they disagree with the human polls or with each other.

- 1) The computers like Arizona State a bit more than the voters do. The Sun Devils are #9 in all three human polls. They are #4 in Anderson Hester, #6 in Sagarin and #5 in all other computer polls. The difference is most likely due to ASU's very recent loss (last week) to Oregon. Voters tend to put more weight on recent losses compared to computers.
- 2) The Hawaii watch remains the same. Only one computer thinks Hawaii is a top 25 team. Wolfe still rates them best at #15. The next best rankings are Anderson Hester and Billingsley at #33. Colley has them unranked, and Massey has them at #54. While Hawaii is still solid in the Harris Interactive Poll (#10) and Coaches' (#12), the Warriors seem to have hit a peak in the AP (#14). In the AP Poll, they had been steadily gaining votes each week. Week 11 shows their first drop in votes, with 63 votes this week compared to 64 last week. Their overall ranking in the AP Poll dropped from #12 last week to #14 this week.
- 3) Aside from Hawaii, Texas has some of the most diverse rankings. The human polls rank the Longhorns: Harris = #12, Coaches' = #14, AP = #15. However, the computers range from #16 (Wolfe) to #24 (Massey).
- 4) The computers generally like Penn State and Florida State. The Nittany Lions only make one appearance in the three human polls (#25 in the Coaches'). Yet they are ranked higher in every computer poll. The highest is Billingsley (#18) and the lowest is Sagarin (#24). The Noles don't crack the top 25 in any of the human polls, but again they do in all computer polls. Wolf and Massey rank the Noles #19, and Colley is lowest at #24.
- 5) Sagarin now ranks Kansas as the #2 team (highest). However, not all computers agree, with Billingsley rating them #7 (lowest) and the rest falling in-between.

There are other items that could be pointed out, but these are the highlights. We'll let you discuss the rest on our [FORUMS](#).



Quick Hits From Around the Country (posted 11/8/07)


[Steve Batterson](#), Quad City Times -- shows a Big 10 bias, ranking Penn State highest (#19) and Purdue highest (#23). Batterson also ranked Illinois (#25) and Michigan (#10), which are well in the upper percentile of all voters. Throw in Ohio State at #1, of course. None of these is a concern on their own, but all together, there is obvious favoritism played to the Big 10.

[Adam Van Brimmer](#), Savannah Morning News -- displays the typical number of extreme votes that keeps him on our watch list every week since he was named [Worst Voter of Week 9](#): Hawaii (#6) is highest, West Virginia (#9) is lowest, Missouri (#10) is lowest, Boise State (#11) is highest, BYU (#17) is highest, and Michigan (#22) is lowest. Georgia (#14), Virginia Tech (#18) and USF (#24) are also on the cusp of the extremes. If this trend continues, Brimmer might be making another run for the top of the page.

[Neal McCready](#), Mobile Press-Register -- votes Illinois highest at #21, is one of five voters to vote LSU #1, and is the only voter to leave Virginia Tech off his ballot. This is a significant difference of opinion since the Hokies highest ranking is #8 and average about #12.

[Last week's Worst Voter](#), [John Wilner](#), San Jose Mercury News -- is staying on the Pollspeak radar by giving Ohio State its lowest ranking of #4, Georgia its highest ranking of #7, West Virginia its lowest ranking of #9 (with Brimmer), Florida its highest ranking of #11, and Cincinnati its highest ranking of #19. Wilner and [Craig James](#) are also the only two voters to leave Hawaii off their ballots. Let's also mention Wilner as one of the five to vote LSU #1 for good measure.

[Ray Ratto](#), San Francisco Chronicle -- is this week's lone believer in Troy (#25).



GOOD Voter of Week 11 -- Steve Conroy, Boston Herald (posted 11/8/07)

1) [Steve Conroy's Week 11 ballot](#) is very clean according to Pollstalker. The closest thing he has to a red flag is ranking Florida as low as #21 or Virginia Tech as low as #16, but he wasn't the most extreme in either case.

2) Conroy also does a nice job of ranking the winners of head-to-head match-ups over the losers (when records are similar):

- Clemson = #20 over Florida State = #22 over Alabama = #25
- Auburn = #17 over Florida = #21
- Florida = #21 over Kentucky = #23

He is consistent with how he ranks these as well as other obvious match-ups. Conroy's ballot demonstrates more forethought than simply sliding teams up and down a certain number of spots. He has taken the time to re-rank teams based on their overall records and on-the-field performances.

Discuss Good Voters of the Week on our [FORUMS](#).

Week 12

Week 12 WORST Voter -- Scott Wolf (Again), Los Angeles Daily News (posted 11/14/07)

Scott Wolf has [repeated](#) as Worst Voter of the Week. He joins [Craig James](#) as the only other voter to be named twice. James has since cleaned up his act, but Wolf seems to have no desire to follow suit and may go for a hat trick. As we enter the final weeks of college football, it seems our group of most-extreme voters is staying consistent. What put Wolf at the top this week was the number of red flags where he was the only voter. He also won the un-popular vote yet again. Here are the highlights from his [week 12 ballot](#):

1) For the second week running, Wolf alone gives Texas their highest ranking at #6 and Kansas its lowest at #8. Wolf is not only the lone extreme in both cases, but his ordering of these two teams is odd. Texas still has two losses and Kansas still has zero, and they now have four common opponents: Oklahoma State, Baylor, Nebraska and Kansas State.

- Texas lost to Kansas State. Kansas beat them.
- Texas beat Baylor 31 - 10. Kansas beat them 58 - 10.
- Texas beat Nebraska 28 - 25. Kansas beat them 76 - 39.
- Texas beat Oklahoma State 38 - 35. Kansas beat the Cowboys 43-28.

The case for Kansas being ranked over Texas has gotten stronger each week; however, that hasn't fazed Wolf. Maybe he is expecting Kansas to lose its last two games, and instead of waiting for it to happen, he is showing his prophetic skills by voting that way now.

2) Oklahoma can thank Mr. Wolf for its lone #1 vote in the AP Poll.

3) Wolf also gives Kentucky its highest ranking at #13, Florida its highest ranking at #9, and West Virginia its second highest ranking at #3. Pollspeak is not saying that these teams are unworthy of the rankings; however, it isn't a good sign when your champion has a pattern of multiple extreme picks.

4) In addition to down-grading Kansas, he also gives Oregon its lowest ranking at #4, Arizona State its second lowest at #12, and Ohio State its lowest at #11.

There are other items that could be pointed out, but these are the highlights. We'll let you discuss the rest on our [FORUMS](#).



Week 12 DIS-honorable Mention -- Jon Wilner, San Jose Mercury News (posted 11/14/07)

Another usual suspect is this week's DIS-honorable Mention. Jon Wilner is no stranger to Pollspeak. He was [Week 10's Worst Voter](#) and has made a few negative cameos in the Quick Hits section. His [week 12](#)

[ballot](#) earned him runner-up this week. The reason he didn't take top honors is due to quality vs. quantity. Wilner has many votes on the edge...not the most extreme, but really close. In fact, there are too many occurrences to place him in the Quick Hits section...or it would no longer be quick.

- 1) Wilner continues to show an SEC bias. He is in the top 10% for all ranked SEC teams: LSU, Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, Kentucky and Auburn.
- 2) The list could get pretty long, so we will just throw everything else into #2. Here is a list of every team where Wilner is either the extreme or within 10% of the extreme. Keep in mind, this list constitutes more than half of his entire ballot...that is hard to do without trying:

- Missouri -- highest #3 (1 agree)
- Georgia -- highest #5 (alone)
- Kansas -- #6 (2 agree, 1 lower...Scott Wolf)
- Florida -- highest #9 (1 agree...Scott Wolf)
- Ohio State -- lowest #11 (3 agree)
- Cincinnati -- highest #15 (alone)
- Auburn -- #20 (3 agree, 1 higher)
- Arizona State -- #12 (4 agree, 1 lower)
- Tennessee -- #13 (1 agree, 1 higher)
- Texas -- #17 (1 agree, 1 lower)
- Kentucky -- #18 (1 agree, 6 higher)
- Virginia -- #23 (1 agree, 3 lower)
- Hawaii -- #24 (2 lower)

Once again, there is nothing wrong with many of these picks individually. It is just when you take the sheer number of extreme picks into account that a concern is raised. You can see Wilner's reasoning in his own words here: [My AP Poll](#).

There are other items that could be pointed out, but these are the highlights. We'll let you discuss the rest on our [FORUMS](#).



Computer Round-Up (posted 11/14/07)

Computer Round-Up is a quick look at the computer polls; particularly where they disagree with the human polls or with each other.

- 1) This week's example of how a late loss can cost you an extra spot or two in the human polls is Ohio State. Ohio State dropped to #7 in all three human polls this week after their loss to Illinois. However, the computer polls don't care as much when a loss occurs; the Buckeyes dropped to #5 or #6 in most polls, and only dropped to #2 in Billingsley.
- 2) There is some positive movement in this week's Hawaii watch. Hawaii has finally broken the top 25 in a second computer poll. Billingsley now ranks them #25. Wolfe is still highest, now at #12. Massey is still worst at #36, but this is a significant jump from last week's #54. The human polls all rank the Warriors significantly higher than all but Wolfe.
- 3) Wolfe and Sagarin both have Kansas as the #1 team in the nation. The rest agree with the pollsters and rank LSU #1.

4) We hate to kick a program while its down, but since Notre Dame hasn't been in the polls lately, Pollspeak hasn't had the opportunity to report on them. So for the only mention of the Irish this year, here are their computer rankings:

- Billingsley: #69 - just below Fresno State
- Anderson Hester: #96 - below LA Monroe and Arkansas State
- Sagarin: #103 - below Yale, Villanova and Southern Miss
- Colley: #106 - just below Temple and Duke
- Massey: #107 - just below Georgia Southern
- Wolfe: #117 - just below Grambling State

5) South Florida is generally liked by the computers. They are unranked in all three human polls...not even getting a single vote in the Coaches' Poll. However, four of the six computers rank them in the top 25. Sagarin is the highest at #15 and Billingsley the lowest at #33.

6) The computers generally don't like Boise State as much as the voters. The Broncos are ranked #17 in the AP Poll and #15 in the Coaches' and Harris Interactive polls. Billingsley tops them all at #12, but the others range from #24 (Colley & Wolfe), #28 (Sagarin and Anderson Hester), to #39 (Massey). The showdown on 11/23 with Hawaii should help the winner...and may even help the loser in the computers.

7) The computers don't like Texas and Oklahoma as much as the voters. They are the only top 25 teams where not a single computer ranked them the same or better than any of the three human polls.

Poll Name	Texas	Oklahoma
Colley	15	9
Sagarin	16	4
Wolfe	21	7
Massey	23	8
Anderson Hester	13	7
Billingsley	21	9
Humans	12 / 11 (coaches)	3

There are other items that could be pointed out, but these are the highlights. We'll let you discuss the rest on our [FORUMS](#).



[Adam Van Brimmer](#), Savannah Morning News -- once again came dangerously close to returning to the top of the page. He has the highest ranks for Hawaii #5, Boise State #11, BYU #14, and Air Force #25, and the lowest ranks for West Virginia #8, Missouri #9, Boston College (unranked) and some other close calls. While waiting for his return, you can re-visit his Worst Voter of the Week ballot in [week 9](#).

[Rich Kaipust](#), Omaha World-Herald -- also just snuck under the radar this week. By casting the only #1 vote for West Virginia, he definitely drew some attention...but mostly from happy Mountaineer fans. Kentucky fans were not as happy since he was one of only five to leave the Wildcats off his ballot. He also ranks Boston College highest at #12 and Georgia lowest at #11.

[Neal McCready](#), Mobile Press-Register -- has USC (#16) and Virginia Tech (#17) lowest, Mississippi State (#23) highest (1 of 3 to rank them) and Air Force (#25) highest along with Brimmer.

[Eric Hansen](#), South Bend Tribune and [Herb Gould](#), Chicago Sun-Times -- are the only two voters to leave Boise State off their ballots.

[Dave Morrison](#), Register-Herald -- is the only voter to rank Alabama (#25) and has Tennessee highest at #11.

[Doug Lesmerises](#), Plain Dealer -- gave Kansas its only #1 vote.

[Kevin Pearson](#), Riverside Press-Enterprise -- is the only voter to leave Tennessee unranked.

[Craig James](#), ABC -- is the only voter to leave Hawaii unranked.

[Scott Rabalais](#), Advocate -- is the only voter to leave Clemson unranked. He also ranks Michigan (#15) and USC (#8) highest.

[Chris Fowler](#), ESPN -- has Penn State highest at #18, but isn't showing Big 10 bias since he is only one of seven to leave Illinois off of his ballot.



GOOD Voter of Week 12 -- Joe Giglio, The News & Observer (North Carolina) (posted 11/15/07)

Joe Giglio's [week 12 ballot](#) is relatively clean according to Pollstalker. There are a few votes near the edge (i.e. Florida, Kentucky and Hawaii), but zero official red flags. Again, Pollspeak doesn't demand perfection. We look for objective voting and a reasonable attention to detail. You can read about Giglio's poll in his own words here: [AP Blog](#).

1) Giglio is almost computer-like in some of his thinking (See Computer Round-Up above). He dropped Ohio State to only #6, which is just within the range of the computers. He also is one of the few who think USF (#24) deserves a ranking...again in line with most of the computers. At #25, he actually ranks Hawaii one spot better than their computer average of #26 (rounded). And finally he ranks Kansas #3, which is coincidentally the average ranking (rounded) of the Jayhawks in the six computer polls.

2) He also seems to pay close attention to what happened on the field when teams have a similar ranking and have played a head-to-head match up:

- Oklahoma #4 over Missouri #5
- Florida #10 over Kentucky #16 and Tennessee #17
- Virginia #15 over Connecticut #23
- Michigan #20 over Illinois #21
- Illinois #21 over Wisconsin and Penn State (unranked)
- Cincinnati #22 over Connecticut #23

An exception is ranking Virginia Tech #12 over Boston College #14. However, this was a conscious decision, which he explains in his [AP Blog](#).

You can continue to make cases for Good Voters of the Week on our [FORUMS](#).

Week 13
Week 13 WORST Voter -- Jon Wilner, San Jose Mercury News (posted 11/21/07)

Jon Wilner received the most votes this week, and Pollspeak agrees that he has bested his [week 10](#) performance as Worst Voter of the Week. He joins [Craig James](#) and [Scott Wolf](#) as the other voters to be named twice. [Last week](#) he was our DIS-honorable mention due mostly to his uncanny number of votes near the edge. With his [week 13 ballot](#) he has managed to top himself. Details are below:

1) Wilner continues to show an SEC bias. He is in the top 10% of voters for all ranked SEC teams: LSU, Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, and Auburn. He did drop Kentucky from his ballot this week, however.

2) Last week, Wilner had 13 teams where he was either the most extreme vote or within 10% of the extreme. That was a record for as long as Pollspeak has been watching, and frankly...we thought it would be in the books for a while. However, it took him just one week to break his own record:

- Missouri -- #2 (6 agree, 1 higher)
- Georgia -- highest #3 (alone)
- Virginia Tech -- highest #5 (2 agree)
- Kansas -- lowest #6 (1 agree)
- Oklahoma -- #8 (3 agree, 1 higher)
- Florida -- #9 (4 agree, 3 higher)
- Ohio State -- lowest #11 (alone)
- Arizona State -- #12 (1 agree, 1 lower)
- Tennessee -- highest #13 (1 agree)
- Cincinnati -- highest #15 (alone)
- Texas -- #17 (1 agree, 1 lower)
- Auburn -- #18 (1 agree, 2 higher)
- Texas Tech -- #20 (1 agree, 1 higher)
- Virginia -- lowest #22 (1 agree)
- Hawaii -- #23 (1 agree, 1 lower)
- Florida State -- #25 (2 higher)

That's 7 votes on the extreme and 9 more within 10% for a total of 16 votes near the edge. Keep in mind that you only get 25 votes. Once again, there is nothing wrong with many of these picks individually. It is just when you take the sheer number of extreme picks into account that a concern is raised.

3) Wilner was also the only AP Voter to rank USC over Ohio State. Of course, Ohio State only has one loss to USC's two. They also have one common opponent, Washington, which USC won 27 - 24 and Ohio State won 33-14. Of the computers that report strength of schedule, most (except Colley) think USC has a slightly stronger SOS, but none of them rank the Trojans over the Buckeyes. You can see Wilner's reasoning in his own words here: [My AP Poll](#).

There are other items that could be pointed out, but these are the highlights. We'll let you discuss the rest on our [FORUMS](#).



Week 13 DIS-honorable Mention -- Molly Yanity, Seattle Post-Intelligencer (posted 11/21/07)

This is Molly Yanity's first visit near the top of Pollspeak's list. In fact, she has only had one minor cameo in the Quick Hits section of [week 9](#), so her [week 13 ballot](#) was a radical departure. Yanity lists [her own AP Ballot](#) on-line, but doesn't explain her choices. Here are the highlights:

1) Yanity actually has more votes right on the extreme than Wilner does. She has 8. However, she only has 4 others near the extreme for a total of 12. This is still exceptionally high and hard to do without trying:

West Virginia -- #2 (5 agree, 1 higher)

Arizona State -- highest #4 (2 agree)

Missouri -- lowest #5 (5 agree)

Boston College -- highest #9 (alone)

Georgia -- lowest #11 (2 agree)

Oklahoma -- #13 (4 agree, 2 lower)

Clemson -- highest #16 (alone)

Florida -- #17 (2 agree, 1 lower)

Kentucky -- highest #20 (1 agree)

Arkansas -- highest #22 (1 agree)

Auburn -- #20 (3 agree, 1 higher)

Illinois -- #23 (1 lower -- reportedly by mistake. See Quick Hits section below)

UCF -- highest #25 (1 agree)

We can't emphasize enough that there is nothing wrong with many of these picks individually. It is the volume of them in this case that concerns Pollspeak.

2) Placing Texas over Oklahoma is a strange choice since they have the same record, and the Sooners beat the Longhorns head-to-head. See (mythical) [rule #1](#). However five other voters did the same thing.

3) In the same manner, she also places USC over Oregon. However, with the loss of Oregon's QB, Dennis Dixon, for the season, she may be thinking that the Ducks are no longer the same team. This may certainly be the case and is a prime example of why [rule #1](#) is a rule of thumb and not a law.

There are other items that could be pointed out, but these are the highlights. We'll let you discuss the rest on our [FORUMS](#).



Computer Round-Up (posted 11/21/07)

Computer Round-Up is a quick look at the computer polls; particularly where they disagree with the human polls or with each other.

1) Sagarin is the only poll (human or computer) to rank Kansas #1. Billingsley is the only one to rank Ohio State #1. The rest all rank LSU #1.

2) Notre Dame beat Duke this weekend, which helped the Fighting Irish's standing in the computer polls significantly. They jumped a total of 26 spots in the six computer polls combined. Why mention the Notre Dame - Duke game? Because last week, Duke was actually above Notre Dame in a poll (Colley Matrix), which probably hasn't happened since...well, before there were home computers anyway. So now the Irish are firmly above the Blue Devils, but they are still behind some surprising teams this week:

- Billingsley: #65 - just behind Colorado (#64). This is Notre Dame's highest ranking and least surprising result. Keep in mind that Billingsley doesn't rank 1AA teams.
- Anderson Hester: #96 - below LA Monroe (fresh off their upset of Alabama) and Iowa State. Anderson Hester also doesn't rank 1AA teams.
- Colley: #97 - just under Buffalo (Duke dropped to # 109)
- Sagarin: #99 - just under 1AA Villanova
- Massey: #100 - below IAA Delaware & James Madison plus LA Monroe.
- Wolfe: #106 - Notre Dame ranks below 9 IAA teams. However, to be fair, so do Western Michigan and Syracuse who are ranked just above the Irish.

3) There is more positive movement in this week's Hawaii watch. The human polls have always respected the Warriors - ranking them #13 in the Coaches' and Harris Interactive polls this week (#14 in the AP). However, they went most of the season without any computer respect. This week, four computers rank them in the top 25: Wolf (#17), Billingsley (#19), Colley (#23) and Anderson Hester (#24). Massey, who had consistently been the worst, checks in at #31 and Sagarin now brings up the rear at #32. While not giving the same level of respect as the voters, this is a huge improvement for the computers. Ironically, Hawaii's biggest champion all year, Wolfe, actually dropped the Warriors from #12 last week to #17 this week.

4) South Florida is #23 in the BCS standings, yet they didn't make the top 25 in any of human polls. So you know the computers have to like the Bulls. Five of the six computers rank them in the top 25. Colley and Sagarin are highest at #13. Wolf, Massey and Anderson Hester all agree at #19, and Billingsley is lowest at #30.

5) The Coaches' Poll had one obvious anomaly - Texas Tech at #24. The Red Raiders didn't crack the top 25 in the other two human polls or ANY of the computer polls:

- Sagarin: #27
- Billingsley: #38
- Wolf: #42
- Anderson: #44
- Massey: #45
- Colley: #46

Texas Tech had zero votes in all three human polls the previous week. This just shows the effect an emotional victory by a huge underdog can have on voters.

7) Speaking of huge underdogs, our final observation comes from the Massey Ratings and the AP Poll. Ray Ratto of the San Francisco Chronicle is the only voter in any of the three polls to give Northern Iowa a vote (#25 on his ballot). Crazy? Maybe, but Massey actually ranks the IAA, 11-0 Panthers #24. So Ratto is not completely alone (although he's close). After the Appalachian State victory over Michigan, it became "legal" to vote for 1AA teams. In what has turned out to be the craziest year in modern college football, it would be a shame not to take advantage of this crazy rule.

There are other items that could be pointed out, but these are the highlights. We'll let you discuss the rest on our [FORUMS](#).



Kansas' #1 votes: 3 in the AP Poll, 8 in the Coaches' Poll and 13 in the Harris Interactive Poll.

[Scott Wolf](#), Los Angeles Daily News -- although Wolf was our Worst Voter of the Week for the last two weeks, his ballot this week was relatively tame. He still has Texas highest in the nation at #4 and Kansas lowest (with Wilner) at #6, but we've already beaten that issue to death over [the last two weeks](#). He also has Florida highest at #7, Kentucky highest at #20 (with Yanity) and only one person has Ohio State lower than his #9 -- this week's Worst Voter, Jon Wilner.

[Rich Kaipust](#), Omaha World-Record -- still has the only #1 vote for West Virginia. He also has Georgia lowest at #11, USF highest at #18 and Virginia lowest at #22.

[Kirk Herbstreit](#), ESPN -- is the only voter to leave Connecticut off of his ballot. He voted Texas Tech highest at #17, USC highest at #7, and only one person voted lower than him on Boise State and Hawaii.

[Adam Van Brimmer](#), Savannah Morning News -- was one of five voters to leave Clemson off his ballot. He also voted BYU highest at #16, Virginia Tech lowest at 15, and Missouri lowest at #5.

[Dave Morrison](#), Register Herald -- gives Penn State their only vote (#22) and Oklahoma its lowest at #14.

[Austin Ward](#), Casper Star-Tribune -- gave Arizona State its highest vote of #4 and USC its lowest of #16. We're guessing he also picked the Sun Devils to beat the Trojans on Thursday.

[Doug Doughty](#), Roanoke Times -- gave Ohio State its highest vote of #2.

[Mike DeArmond](#), Kansas City Star -- is the only voter to rank Missouri #1 (and LSU lowest at #3). There is a slight possibility of home-town bias here.

[Myron Patton](#), KOKH-TV -- gave Tulsa its only vote (#25).

[Ray Ratto](#), San Francisco Chronicle -- as mentioned in the Computer Round-Up section above, he is the only voter to rank Northern Iowa (#25); however, we'll also mention that it was at the expense of Tennessee. He was the only voter to leave the Volunteers off the ballot.

[Israel Gutierrez](#), Miami Herald -- is the only voter to rank California...and quite high at #20. He is also the only voter to leave Illinois off his ballot. In fact, he received the second most votes this week...mainly from angry Illini. Pollspeak contacted him, and here is Gutierrez's response:

"It's fairly simple. While going through my weekly process of maneuvering teams and adjusting positions, I accidentally placed California in the slot I intended to place Illinois. I thought I double-checked the poll before I sent it, but must have just overlooked the error. I didn't notice the mistake until Sunday night and was informed the mistake couldn't be corrected, so I'll have to make sure not to make any errors in this week's poll. That's just so everyone knows that just because I live and work in Florida doesn't mean I'm anti-Ron Zook. Thanks, Israel Gutierrez"



GOOD Voter of Week 13 -- Pete DiPrimio, Fort Wayne News - Sentinel
(posted 11/22/07)

There are usually many "good" voters each week, and this week is no exception. Sometimes Pollspeak chooses one that best demonstrates a point. This week we chose Pete DiPrimio partly because [his week 13 ballot](#) is the polar opposite of our "bad" voters this week. DiPrimio has zero extreme votes and zero votes within 10% of the extreme. However, our point is not to say that a ballot should have zero extreme votes. We are just highlighting what such a ballot looks like. We are not implying that all ballots should conform or be average. That's not realistically possible or desirable. Nor does this week's theme imply that extreme votes are the only reason to be concerned with a ballot. Just look at DiPrimio's ballot as an example of how AP voters are generally thinking.

For example, DiPrimio has Kansas #2, which is where most voters rank them...at least until the showdown with his #4 Missouri this weekend. A good case could also be made for ranking Kansas #1 or #3 (or lower) last week. The Jayhawk's #2 ranking is not better just because it is more popular. However, unbiased and consistent voting is definitely a trait Pollspeak looks for in good voters.

On that note, we also selected DiPrimio for his good use of [rule #1](#). When records are the same, he typically puts the winners of head-to-head match-ups over the losers:

- Illinois #16 over Wisconsin #20
- Cincinnati #23 over USF #24
- Virginia #14 over Connecticut #21
- Florida #13 over Tennessee #18
- Oklahoma #10 over Texas #11
- Oregon #8 over USC #12

His biggest exception is ranking Virginia Tech (#7) significantly higher than Boston College (#17). However, there are only four voters who did the opposite, and if DiPrimio followed suit, he would probably have one or two votes on or near the extreme. As we said, there is no perfection in the polls, and this paradox is yet another example. All Pollspeak asks of voters is to take their job seriously, put time into it, and at least try to make sense of it all. If Pollspeak can do it, so can you.

You can continue to make cases for Good Voters of the Week on our [FORUMS](#).

Week 14
**Week 14 WORST Voter -- Jon Wilner (again), San Jose Mercury News
(posted 11/28/07)**

Jon Wilner becomes our first, third-time recipient of Worst Voter of the Week. With only a few poll weeks left, Wilner has put himself in prime position for Worst Voter of the Year, 2007. However, in a season of upsets, anything is still possible. Once again, Wilner received the most votes this week. The reasons are similar to [his week 13 performance](#), so we'll try to be brief. Check [his week 14 ballot](#) for all of the details. Highlights are below, but you can see Wilner's reasoning in his own words here: [My AP Poll](#).

1) Last week, Wilner had 16 teams where he was either the most extreme vote or within 10% of the extreme. That was a Pollspeak record and we hope it stands for a long time. His 13 near-extreme votes this week pales by comparison, but it is still this week's highest total (along with Molly Yanity):

- Georgia -- highest #2 (alone)
- West Virginia -- lowest #3 (5 agree)
- Boston College -- #9 (2 higher)
- Tennessee -- #10 highest (1 agree)
- Ohio State -- lowest #11 (alone)
- Cincinnati -- highest #12 (alone)
- Clemson -- #13 (1 agree, 1 higher)
- Auburn -- #15 (3 higher)
- Kansas -- lowest #17 (alone)
- Texas Tech -- #19 (4 higher)
- Hawaii -- #20 lowest (1 agree)
- Texas -- #24 (3 agree, 1 lower)
- Wisconsin -- lowest, unranked (6 agree)

That's 8 votes on the extreme (which is tops this week) and 5 more within 10% for a total of 13 votes near the edge. Once again, there is nothing wrong with many of these picks individually. It is just when you take them as a whole that a concern is raised.

2) Ranking Ohio State #11 and Kansas #17, which are both lowest in the country, (and he is alone on these) deserves its own category and is likely why he received the most votes this week.

3) While not alone on the following choices, Wilner makes some questionable judgments on these teams' ranking in relation to each other:

Auburn over USF -- even though USF has a better record and beat Auburn. Five of the six computers also rank USF better than Auburn.

Virginia Tech over Boston College -- they have the same records, but BC won the head-to-head.

Virginia Tech over LSU -- again same records, but LSU dominated.

USC over Ohio State -- while these two didn't play each other, this truly is an odd choice, which is easy to see...not a single computer agrees with him.

There are other items that could be pointed out, but these are the highlights. We'll let you discuss the rest on our [FORUMS](#).



Week 14 DIS-honorable Mention(s) -- Scott Wolf, Molly Yanity, Austin Ward, Neal McCready, Adam Van Brimmer, Anthony SanFilippo, Doug Doughty, Glenn Guilbeau, Bret Bloomquist and Craig James (posted 11/28/07)

As the end of the 2007 football season draws near, people have noted that the candidate pool for Worst Voter of the Week seems to be consistent. So we decided to do some research and see if there was a common thread amongst them. We found a significant one: every Worst Voter (and some DIS-honorable mentions) had at least 9 near-extreme votes. We only started paying close attention to near-extreme votes in week 13, so they weren't really a consideration in our choices before then. To clarify, a "near-extreme" vote is when 10% or less of the voters either agree or are higher/lower on a particular vote. In the case of the AP Poll, 10% means 7 votes. For example, this week Jon Wilner voted Tennessee #10, which was the highest. This is "on the extreme." He also voted Clemson #13, but 1 person voted higher (and only 1 agreed with him)...this is "near the extreme." If 3 people agreed and 4 people were higher...that would also be near the extreme.

So every Worst Voter of the Week followed this trend of 9 near-extreme votes or more. In fact, [Craig James in week 7](#) and [Jon Wilner in week 10](#) each had 15 votes near the extreme, and there was no mention of it. (FYI, when looking for near-extremes, you also have to include teams that voters DIDN'T rank, as long as 7 or less people also didn't rank them.)

We'll reiterate that the number of near-extreme votes should not be and was not the only consideration for the Worst Voter of the Week. However, it is interesting that they all have this in common. What usually sets the Worst apart is the number of votes they have ON the extreme, as well as placement of teams in relation to each other.

But for this week's DIS-Honorable mention, we thought we would try an exercise. If 9 is the magic number of near-extremes for Worst Voters, let's choose 8 for this week's DIS-honorable mentions and see who qualifies. Here is the list, ranked from most to least:

- [Molly Yanity](#), Seattle Post Intelligencer -- has 13 near-extreme votes, tying Jon Wilner. However, Wilner has 8 on the extreme, where Yanity only has 6. Yanity repeats her DIS-honorable mention from [last week](#).
- [Anthony SanFilippo](#), Delaware County Daily Times -- 11 near-extremes in total, but flying under the radar with 4 votes on the extreme.
- [Adam Van Brimmer](#), Savannah Morning News -- 10 near-extremes and 3 on the extreme. Our [week 9 Worst Voter of the Week](#) has been close a couple more times, but this is first official re-appearance near the top.
- [Austin Ward](#), Casper Star-Tribune -- Our [week 10 DIS-honorable Mention](#). This week he has 9 near-extremes and 2 on the extreme.
- [Glenn Guilbeau](#), Gannett Louisiana News Service -- 9 near the extreme and 6 on the extreme. Guilbeau hasn't had much impact on Pollspeak so far, but we'll be keeping an eye out from now on.
- [Doug Doughty](#), Roanoke Times -- 9 near -extremes and 6 on the extreme. Doughty is also a newcomer to the Pollspeak radar.
- [Neal McCready](#), Mobile Press-Register -- 9 near-extremes and 5 on the extreme. This is McCready's first time as a DIS-honorable mention, but he has been on the cusp a few times and is a regular in the Quick Hits section.
- [Bret Bloomquist](#), El Paso Times -- A past Good Voter of the Week. Bloomquist has 9 near-extremes this week and 3 on the extreme. Of course back in [Week 9](#) he only had 7 near the

- extreme and 1 on the extreme. Even though he didn't have enough near-extremes back then to fall in with this group, 7 is still a high amount. Which also, goes to show that you shouldn't judge by near-extremes alone (except when making a point about near-extremes).
- [Scott Wolf](#), Los Angeles Daily News -- a regular on Pollspeak and two-time [Worst Voter of the Week](#). Wolf has 9 near the extreme, but only 2 on the extreme. This is a relatively tame ballot based on Wolf's prior weeks.
 - [Craig James](#), ABC/ESPN -- 8 near-extremes and 3 on the extreme. It seems James is the only one included this week by lowering near-extremes from 9 to 8. And James has done a good job of staying off the radar since his back-to-back Worst Voter wins in weeks [seven](#) and [eight](#). However, it completes our collection of Worst Voters of the Week. Every one of them is still included in this list (if you add Wilner, of course), which we think is a telling sign.

There are other items that could be pointed out, but these are the highlights. We'll let you discuss the rest on our [FORUMS](#).



Computer Round-Up (posted 11/28/07)

Computer Round-Up is a quick look at the computer polls; particularly where they disagree with the human polls or with each other.

1) The big news this week is: Who is #1? Last week, three teams had #1 rankings. Sagarin ranked Kansas #1. Billingsley ranked Ohio State #1. The rest all ranked LSU #1. This week, none of those teams are ranked #1. Of course LSU and Kansas' #1 rankings were lost along with their games last week, but even idle Ohio State dropped to #2 in Billingsley. In their places, are now West Virginia and Missouri, and the opinions are definitely split:

- **West Virginia** is #1 in -- Coaches' Poll, Colley, Sagarin, and Billingsley.
- **Missouri** is #1 in -- AP Poll, Harris Poll, Wolfe, Massey, and Anderson Hester.

2) Arkansas is creating similar rifts between the polls. After their upset of #1 LSU, the 8-4 Razorbacks only made the top 25 in the Coaches' Poll (#25), Sagarin (#21) and Billingsley (#18). The other two human and four computer polls range from #26 - #31.

3) Notre Dame beat Stanford last weekend and continued its climb up the computer rankings. Billingsley is still highest at #63, Colley is now lowest at #91 and the rest of the computers rank the Fighting Irish in the 80's. Sagarin and Massey rank the Irish #88, which ironically was the year of their last national championship (1988). Also painfully ironic, The Cardinal is still ranked above the Irish in 4 of the 6 computer polls.

4) After Hawaii's biggest win of the year over Boise State and winning the WAC Championship, you would expect significant improvement in their standings....and there was. Hawaii jumped from #15 to #12 in the BCS standings. This might not be as big a jump as Warrior fans were hoping for, though. The human polls continue to respect the Warriors - ranking them #10 in the Coaches' and Harris Interactive polls (#11 in the AP). They even picked up one first place vote in Harris. However, the computers are still lower, which dragged them down to #12 overall. This week, all computers rank the Warriors in the top 25, which is a first: Billingsley #10, Wolf #14, Massey #16, Anderson Hester #17, Colley and Sagarin #18.

5) Boise State took a pounding in the computers after the Hawaii loss. Broncos fans can thank Billingsley for its #15 ranking, almost single-handedly keeping them in the BCS top 25. Otherwise, the other computers would have pushed them out. Anderson Hester (#38) and Massey (#46) were the lowest.

6) South Florida has climbed to #21 in the BCS standings, yet they still aren't ranked in the Coaches' Poll (and are only #25 in the Harris and AP Polls). So the computers still like the Bulls a lot more than the voters do. Five of the six computers rank them in the top 20. Sagarin is highest at #13 and Billingsley is still lowest at #30. The rest rank them between #14 and #16. South Florida represents one of the biggest gaps between human and computer thinking (especially if you remove the extremes).

7) The computers typically like Oregon better than the voters. Humans average for Oregon = #19. Computers average for Oregon = #16 (rounded). We can only guess, but the difference likely has something to do with the voters knowing that star QB, Dennis Dixon, is done for the year. That's not always the case since Billingsley ranks them a relatively low #21. Regardless, we're confident that the Billingsley formula doesn't have a Dennis Dixon component.

8) Texas Tech's stay in the Coaches' Poll was short lived. They dropped out after one week even though they were idle. Once the fervor of the Oklahoma upset died down, maybe some coaches thought they were too quick to rank them. One thing is certain, it shows the "what have you done for me lately" attitude often displayed in the human polls. As for the computers, the Red Raiders didn't break into the top 25 in any poll, but they did actually gain a couple of spots on the whole.

9) 1AA, 12-0, Northern Iowa is now up to #22 in the Massey Ratings. However, AP voter Ray Ratto rethought his #25 ranking of the Panthers last week; so now Massey is the only entity (with a vote) to recognize Northern Iowa as a top-25 BCS team.

10) Texas is the only top 25 team ranked lower by EVERY computer than the lowest human poll. In short, the computers don't like Texas as much as the voters do. Even perennial computer punching bag, Hawaii, doesn't have this problem. Theories about what the voters see in the Longhorns that the computers don't are welcome on the Pollspeak [forums](#).

There are other items that could be pointed out, but these are the highlights. We'll let you discuss the rest on our [FORUMS](#).



Quick Hits From Around the Country (posted 11/29/07)

[Ray Ratto](#), San Francisco Chronicle -- came close to our DIS-honorable Mention list with seven votes near the extreme. However, he only has one vote on the extreme: Troy at #24, which is the highest of Troy's two votes this week.

[Glenn Guilbeau](#), Gannett Louisiana News Service -- as part of his nine near-extreme votes, he was the only one to leave Clemson unranked. He replaced them with Kentucky. Guilbeau was one of only four voters to rank Kentucky, and he ranked them highest at #21. He also had the largest differential between Boston College and Virginia Tech. Even though they have the same records and BC won, he has the Hokies a whopping 18 spots over the Eagles.

[Dave Goren](#), WXII-TV -- has six near the edge, but more notably has LSU highest at #3, Michigan highest at #22 and Texas lowest at #25.

[Chris Fowler](#), ESPN -- has USC highest at #3.

[Barker Davis](#), Washington Times -- gives Wake Forest (#25) its only vote.

[Kirk Herbstreit](#), ESPN -- gives Tulsa (#25) its only vote. To make room, he was one of nine to leave Oregon unranked.

[Chip Cosby](#), Lexington Herald-Leader -- gives Penn State (#25) its only vote in place of Virginia. He was only one of six to leave the Cavaliers off his ballot.

[John Hunt](#), The Oregonian -- was the only voter to leave off Tennessee. He replaced them with Oregon State (#24), and was one of only two voters to rank the Beavers. (Craig James was the only one to rank them higher.)

[Craig James](#), ABC/ESPN -- in addition to his 8 extremes, he also has the biggest gap between Virginia Tech and LSU. Even though both teams have the same record and LSU dominated the head-to-head match-up, he has Virginia Tech seven spots higher than LSU. So it is no surprise that as part of his extreme votes, he has the Hokies highest and the Tigers lowest of all voters.



GOOD Voter of Week 14 -- Matt McCoy, WTVN-AM Radio (posted 11/29/07)

[Matt McCoy](#) is this week's Good Voter of the Week for two main reasons...and both prove a point:

1) He has a low number of extremes. He only has two on the extreme:

- Virginia Tech -- lowest, #11 (3 agree)
- BYU -- lowest, unranked (7 agree)

So once again, it is OK to have some extreme votes. Pollspeak is not looking for zero extremes.

2) More importantly, he voted opposite of the Worst Voter of the Week, Jon Wilner, in the picks highlighted above. Pollspeak will not make it a practice to measure levels of Wilnerism in voters, but generally the opposite of the Worst is Good:

- USF #20 over Auburn #21 -- USF has a better record and beat Auburn.
- Five of the six computers also rank USF better than Auburn.
- Boston College #10 over Virginia Tech #11 -- they have the same records, and BC won the head-to-head.
- LSU #7 over Virginia Tech #11 -- again same records, but LSU dominated.
- Ohio State #3 over USC #6 -- Every computer agrees with OSU over USC.

You can continue to make cases for Good Voters of the Week on our [FORUMS](#).

Week 15

**Week 15 WORST Voter -- Jon Wilner (again), San Jose Mercury News
(posted 12/08/07)**

Looking at the [Full Analysis Report for week 15](#), Wilner is an easy target. Obviously, his [week 15 ballot](#) has the most extreme votes (9). However, that isn't the only reason he is this week's Worst. He also happens to have received the most votes for Worst Voter of the Week, but that isn't the only reason he was named this week's Worst. The main reason he was named Worst Voter of the Week is:

1) Spite. Not spite against Wilner...the spite he shows **Ohio State**. Wilner obviously doesn't want Ohio State to go to the national championship game, and he seems willing to use the power vested in him to help make that possible. After all, he says in his [AP Poll Blog](#) that the Buckeyes have "no business being in the national championship game." Pollspeak has no problem with that opinion. We fully respect the other voter's who picked **LSU, Oklahoma, Hawaii, Virginia Tech** or **Georgia #1**. The reason Wilner is being singled out is that he dropped Ohio State all the way to #8. Just to be clear, this is lower than any computer or any voter in the Coaches' Poll or Harris Interactive Poll. This is lower than he ranked six 2-loss teams and one 3-loss team. This is unreasonably low and seems it could only serve the purpose of helping keep the Buckeyes out of the national championship game...as he asserts. Unbiased voters should not use their ballot as a weapon.

2) Here is the list of Wilner's votes on the extreme:

- **Ohio State** -- #8 (lowest)
- **Boston College** -- #10 (highest)
- **Tennessee** -- #11 (highest)
- **Cincinnati** -- #13 (highest)
- **Kansas** -- #17 (lowest)
- **Oregon State** -- #19 (highest)
- **Hawaii** -- #20 (lowest)
- **BYU** -- #25 (lowest)
- **Wisconsin** -- unranked (lowest)

3) Pollspeak actually agrees with much of the reasoning Wilner uses to rank teams in relation to each other. However, there were a couple of notable exceptions:

- He ranks **Auburn** (#15) over **USF** (#21) even though the Bulls have a better record and beat the Tigers in the head-to-head matchup.
- He ranks **Texas Tech** (#18) over **Texas** (#24) again, even though the Longhorns have a better record and beat the Red Raiders in the head-to-head matchup.

A final note on Wilner's **Ohio State** ranking. This isn't the secretive Coaches' Poll, where the voters have a vested interest in improving the rankings of teams they play and lowering the rankings of their nearest competition. That is almost an expected part of the Coaches Poll, and that topic will be covered shortly. However, we really expect more from AP Voters, which is the biggest reason Wilner has earned a fourth stint as Worst Voter of the Week.

There are other items that could be pointed out, but these are the highlights. We'll let you discuss the rest on our [FORUMS](#).



GOOD Voter of Week 15 -- Doug Lesmerises, Plain Dealer (posted 12/09/07)

First a disclaimer: Nobody at Pollspeak has an affiliation with nor particular affinity for The Ohio State University or the state of Ohio for that matter. That being said, our Good Voter of the Week is the Ohio State beat writer and was chosen partly as a counter-point to Jon Wilner's anti-Buckeye-ism. After all, we're not picking the "best" voter...just one of the many good ones. So this week's is Cleveland's own [Doug Lesmerises](#).

There's always more to say about the problems in a ballot than what's right. It's hard to find fault with anything on Lesmerises' [week 15 ballot](#). He has no votes on the extreme and only two near the extreme. So I guess **Florida** fans and **Arizona State** fans could cry fowl. However, looking objectively at his ballot, it's rock solid.

Lesmerises' also did a fine job of enforcing [rule \(of thumb\) #1](#). In short, when two teams have the same record, and have played each other, rank the winner ahead:

- **Boston College (#14)** over **Clemson (#15)**
- **Cincinnati (#17)** over **USF (#19)**
- **USF (#19)** over **Auburn (#21)**
- **Auburn (#21)** over **Arkansas (unranked)**
- **Texas (#20)** over **Texas Tech (unranked)**
- **Illinois (#12)** over **Wisconsin (#24)**

You can make cases for Good Voters of the Week on our [FORUMS](#).

Week 16
Bad Voter of Week 16 -- Glenn Guilbeau, Gannett Louisiana News Service
 (posted 1/15/08)

Glenn Guilbeau is our first Bad Voter of the Week and our last of the 2007 football season. Previously we named "Worst" Voters of the Week. The name change allows us to give more weight to your votes and will hopefully lead to some more variety. If Pollspeak sees that a more heinous offender is falling through the cracks, we'll point him or her out.

In the meantime, Guilbeau not only won the un-popular vote (see below) but he was also this week's **most extreme voter**. It is good to see that the majority of Pollspeak readers are highly educated and are not only swayed by the treatment of their favorite team. Unlike the first Pollspeak vote, where more than 400 angry Kentucky fans overwhelmed the voting and targeted Craig James with their outrage.

Oh, who are we kidding. When the offense is egregious enough, an angry mob will always take over the voting. This week's alignment might just be coincidental. Here are a few teams who might not be happy with Guilbeau in his final ballot:

- **USC** -- #7 -- lowest
- **Oklahoma** -- #15 -- lowest
- **Clemson** -- Unranked -- lowest

Guilbeau's highest rankings of **Kentucky** (#16), **Tennessee** (#9), **Missouri** (#3) and **Ohio State** (#2), didn't seem to win him many votes though.

The top four bad vote-getters are listed below. The way Pollspeak will tabulate final rankings is based on Bad Votes minus Good Votes. This system will carry on through basketball season, and we'll re-evaluate before next football season.

Name	Good Votes	Bad Votes	Net Bad Votes
Glenn Guilbeau	2	56	54
Chris Fowler	5	41	36
Rich Kaipust	1	22	21
Kirk Herbstreit	16	36	20



Good Voter of Week 16 -- Tom Keegan, Lawrence Journal-World
(posted 1/16/08)

Congratulations to [Tom Keegan](#), our last Good Voter of the Week for the 2007 football season. Aside from not angering any large, internet-savvy fan base, he also has zero extreme votes and only two near the extreme: the relatively high **Kansas** at #3 and relatively low **USC** at #5.

As with the Bad Voter of the Week, we'll spare a discussion of [Rule #1](#) this late in the season. There are so many A vs. B vs. C situations at this point, that the analysis would be too long to make good reading. However, you can feel free to discuss the issue on our [FORUMS](#). For example, why would most people (including Keegan) vote Oregon higher than Oregon State? Even though they have the same record and Oregon State won the head-to-head match up. [Discuss](#).

The top four good vote-getters are listed below. The way Pollspeak will tabulate final rankings is based on Good Votes minus Bad Votes. This system will carry on through basketball season, and we'll re-evaluate before next football season. Note that Kirk Herbstreit is in the top four of both good and bad votes. However, he still has 20 more bad than good votes. Also noteworthy, it seems people enjoy casting bad votes more than good votes.

Name	Good Votes	Bad Votes	Net Good Votes
Tom Keegan	32	0	32
Israel Gutierrez	25	10	15
Adam Van Brimmer	28	20	8
Kirk Herbstreit	16	36	-20



Worst Voter of the Year - Football 2007 -- Jon Wilner, San Jose Mercury News (posted 1/17/08)

Jon Wilner is our inaugural Worst Voter of the Year. Pollspeak debated various methods for choosing: open votes or heated internal debates with people arguing over things like standard deviation and hurling words like "inept" or "prejudice" across the boardroom like weapons. However, in the end, we determined that all the information necessary to make the decision had already been gathered over the course of the season. So we agreed on a simple point system:

- Worst Voter of the Week = 1 point
- DIS-Honorable Mention = 1/2 point

Ties would be broken by counting negative mentions in the Quick Hits section. (Not all Quick Hits are negative.) However, there would be no tie this year. This method is a bit predictable and isn't nearly as exciting as the other methods, but our Worst Voter of the Year won by such a convincing margin, there was no need for drama.

Not only was Wilner the points leader (see below), but he also took Worst Voter of the Week an unprecedented three weeks straight (weeks 13-15). His only DIS-Honorable Mention came in week 12, and his first Worst Voter of the Week was in week 10. So out of the 10 weeks that Pollspeak awarded dubious honors, Wilner was singled out in half. The competition really didn't stand a chance.

Ironically, [Wilner's final ballot](#) in week 16, was one of his least concerning. Maybe he sensed that he was dangerously close to locking up Worst Voter of the Year and tried to avoid the distinction. Or maybe Pollspeak has helped educate him. Or maybe it is a coincidence. In any case, Wilner will top our recommendation list for removal from the AP Poll in our coming report to the AP. If the AP decides to include Wilner next year, we hope he takes greater care with the responsibility vested in him, and he moves forward knowing that we are now paying attention.

Voter	Points
Jon Wilner	4.5
Scott Wolf	3
Craig James	2.5
Adam Van Brimmer	1.5
Glenn Guilbeau	1.5
Molly Yanity	1
Austin Ward	1