

BCS/ABC MATCHUPS
Bowl Championship Series/After Bowl Championship

NEW YEAR'S BOWL MATCHUPS TO DETERMINE THE COLLEGE FOOTBALL FINAL FOUR BASED ON WINNERS ONLY BEING ELIGIBLE USING BCS RANKINGS. A CONFERENCE BOWL RECORD WOULD BE A NEW BCS RANKING FACTOR

- ORANGE - Oklahoma versus Georgia -- Jan. 1
- ROSE - USC versus Michigan -- Jan. 1
- SUGAR - LSU versus Miami of Ohio -- Jan. 3
- CAPITAL ONE/GATOR - Tennessee versus Florida State -- Jan. 4
- COTTON - Texas versus Miami of Florida -- Jan. 1
- FIESTA BOWL - Ohio State versus Kansas State -- Jan. 2

After the traditional New Year's bowls are completed, match only the top four bowl-winning teams from essentially six bowls using the Bowl Championship Series rankings that will have a new element -- conference bowl records.

This change will create more excitement for the New Year's bowls and other bowls that have lost their luster because only the championship game and Rose Bowl, if it has a Pac 10 and Big 10 matchup, is meaningful. It will give the feeling of a playoff without actually having one while maintaining and enhancing the tradition of college football.

The other bowls would have interest revived because a conference bowl record component will be added to the final BCS rankings to determine the Final Four.

This plan will generate an extra \$150 million to \$200 million a year in postseason revenue and add more interest to regular season games, especially conference matchups for teams who have already lost. At the same time it maintains that sudden-death feeling with the outcome of each regular season game.

The BCS would expand the BCS bowls from the existing four bowls to six bowls. This plan would diffuse anti-trust issues and allow more access from non-BCS conferences. Under this system Tulane, Marshall and TCU would have received bids during the first five years of the BCS. Even BYU may have received a bid with the way the computer programs used in the rankings have been reconfigured.

That means 12 teams playing in those BCS bowls instead of the current 8 teams. The BCS can follow tradition and have the Big 10 and Pac 10 play in the Rose Bowl, and have the SEC champ play in the Sugar Bowl.

Matchups overseen by a committee of athletic directors and bowl officials would be determined by using a 1 versus 12 formula and so on down the line with exceptions. Conference matchups would be avoided and the Big 10 Pac 10 matchup would be maintained. The committee's role would essentially help determine where the two teams play.

The BCS can fill those 12 slots by having the top seven ranked conference champs in the BCS rankings get bids, as long as the team is in the top 15 of the BCS standings.

There are exceptions.

Any conference champ that finishes in the top 12 in the BCS rankings in a given year or whose historic conference champion ranking in the BCS standings is 15 or better would be guaranteed one of the berths. This system protects the powerhouse football conferences and the revenue they are counting on yet provides access to non-BCS conferences.

Drawing from the BCS rankings, the remaining at-large spots would be filled by non-conference champs and independents. The BCS could either guarantee a bid to any independent if they finish in the top 12 of the BCS standings or to treat them as other at-large teams

ying for the remaining at-large spots.

Revenue could be divided to conferences based in part on their historical participation in the BCS games, a team's accomplishment in a given year, or both. Conferences with existing ties to the two new bowls (possibly Cotton, Gator, Capital One or other) that would be made part of the new six-bowl BCS could be reimbursed for their losses for existing ties they have with those bowls.

It is possible but unlikely that one of the Final Four teams could come from outside one of the six bowls if there are several upsets.

To determine the Final Four rankings use the BCS scoring system but add a conference bowl record element. A conference that went 4-2 in bowls, for example would have two points deducted from the BCS score of teams within that conference. Any team that was undefeated or ranked No. 1 prior to the calculations could be made immune from having points added to its score if its conference fared poorly in bowl games. Teams undefeated after the bowl games could even be given special point deductions.

To reduce travel and make it easier on fans by having them focus on the New Year's bowls as their big road trip, the semifinal games with four teams would be played on home campuses of the top two ranked teams. The games would be played on the first available weekend after bowl games, which typically is a time when school is not in session.

The championship game - called the Championship Bowl, National Title Bowl or National Championship Bowl - would be played the following week. Cities across the country would bid to host this game.

Teams that advance to the Final Four could have spring practice time reduced. Players who advance to the title game would arrive on Thursday, meaning they miss only one or two days of school during the new semester, if it has even started.

In review, the Bowl Championship Series has come under harsh criticism by some but it has revived interest in college football and is better than what was used in the past in matching the top two teams. But a modified BCS system can be a framework for being more inclusive and generating more excitement and revenue.

Having four teams play after the bowls won't diminish the bowls or the regular season. Currently, college football fans lose interest in watching teams that have a loss and can no longer compete for the BCS title. This system also adds fairness because not all schedules are created equal. A team with one loss might be undefeated if it played the schedule of a team ranked ahead of it.

The reason the interest in college football has been revived is because fans recognize the BCS as the closest thing in history to finally identifying a true champion. This plan would fulfill those wishes even more.