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11/27/2002

The Wheeler plan is a way to fix the Bowl Championship Series while maintaining the integrity of the bowl system. The major concession from the NCAA is that the last game for all teams in Division 1 must end by the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend in November. There are three major points to remember in this explanation. 1. All of the bowls remain in their current location on their current date. 2. All bowl-eligible teams go to one bowl. 3. The playoff system only determines which bowl the top 16 teams attend.

Therefore, on the Sunday following the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend in November all of the bowls send out their invitations except the 4 major (non-BCS) bowls and the 4 BCS bowls. Also on this Sunday the pairings are announced for the 16 team playoff to begin on the 4<sup>th</sup> weekend in November. (note the proximity to Thanksgiving.) On the 4<sup>th</sup> weekend in November, the playoffs begin with team 1 playing 16, 2 playing 15, etc according to their final BCS ranking. The games would be played at the higher ranking team's home stadium and the home team and the NCAA would help pay the visiting teams travel expenses. After this round of games there will be 8 winning teams and 8 losing teams. The winning teams move on in the playoffs. The losing teams are invited to the 4 major (non-BCS) bowls, with first preference given to conference tie-ins. The second round of the playoffs are played on the 1<sup>st</sup> weekend of December with the same rules as the 1<sup>st</sup> round. After the 2<sup>nd</sup> round there will be 4 winning teams which move on in the playoffs. The 4 losing teams will receive invitations to the last BCS games to choose for that year. (This year it would be the Sugar and Rose). On the 2<sup>nd</sup> weekend in December, the 4 remaining teams play in the 3<sup>rd</sup> round of the playoffs with the same rules as the 1<sup>st</sup> 2 rounds. The 2 losing teams are invited to the runner-up BCS bowl, (Orange bowl this year) and the winning teams are invited to the Championship game. (Fiesta Bowl this year).

All of these are home games and should be well attended by the home team's fans. Every team has another game following the playoffs, so no fan should feel the need to travel to every game with the concern that this will be their team's final game. The bowls continue to be a reward for teams both in and out of the BCS playoffs. The playoffs will not coincide with any existing bowl game, and every team gets at least 3 weeks to prepare for their bowl game, even the teams in the championship game. The only caveat would be that all major conferences would need to be represented, which would probably lead to team 16 and maybe team 15 in the BCS getting bumped. This system can also be run as an 8 team playoff after the conference championships thereby insuring that each conference is represented in a BCS bowl game. I believe, however, that the non-BCS major bowl games will step up their contributions in order to be considered for this system.

As you can see, this is an epiphany in the thinking of this system. This system can be easily implemented and will satisfy both sides of the debate. It will be good for both the television network and the NCAA's corporate partners. The BCS maintains its current system of deciding teams and this should not affect any current contracts.

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Week 1

Team # 1 vs #16 Team #2 vs. #15 Team #3 vs. #14 Team #4 vs. #13

Team #5 vs. #12 Team #6 vs. #11 Team #7 vs. #10 Team #8 vs. #9

Thanksgiving weekend at the higher ranked team's home stadium (or large city nearby)

Losing teams are invited to 4 New Year's Day bowls, winning teams advance.

Week 2

Winning teams are again matched up with #1 vs. #16 winner playing #8 vs. #9 winner, #2 vs. #15

winner playing #7 vs. #10 winner and so on.

Games played on the 1<sup>st</sup> weekend in December at the higher ranked team's home stadium

Losing teams are invited to two lowest BCS bowls for that year, winning teams advance

Week 3

The 4 remaining teams are paired up in an obvious way

Games played on the 2<sup>nd</sup> weekend in December at the higher ranked team's home stadium

Losing teams are invited to the runner-up BCS bowl for that year, and the winners advance to the championship game.

One could argue that bowls will not like being a consolation prize, but aren't they now already?