



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 2, 2022

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## College Football Playoff Board of Managers Votes to Expand Playoff to 12 Teams

*Six Highest-Ranked Conference Champions Along with Six At-Large Teams*

*Format to Begin for the 2026 Regular Season, Unless Earlier Implementation is Possible*

**IRVING, Texas** – The Board of Managers, a group of university presidents and chancellors that oversees the College Football Playoff (CFP), today voted to expand the current four-team playoff into a 12-team playoff. The unanimous decision was reached during a video conference.

The new format, consistent with a proposal the board reviewed in the fall and winter of 2021-22, will begin in the 2026 college football regular season. The board has tasked the College Football Management Committee (the 10 conference commissioners and the Director of Athletics at the University of Notre Dame, who run the playoff) with assessing the possibility of beginning the expanded playoff in either the 2024 or 2025 regular season.

“This is an historic and exciting day for college football,” said Mark Keenum, the President of Mississippi State and the chairman of the CFP Board of Managers. “More teams, more participation and more excitement are good for our fans, alumni, and student-athletes. I’m grateful to my colleagues on the board for their thoughtful approach to this issue and for their resolve to get expansion across the goal line and for the extensive work of the Management Committee that made this decision possible.”

The Management Committee will implement the board’s decision, including determining such matters as the dates for games, broadcast entities, revenue allocations, sites of the 11 games, and the term of the agreement.

The board approved the following:

1. The 12 teams will be the six conference champions ranked highest by the selection committee (no minimum ranking requirement), plus the six highest-ranked teams not included among the six highest-ranked conference champions.
2. The ranking of the teams will continue to be done by a selection committee whose size, composition, and method of selection will remain substantially unchanged. The Management Committee will modify the selection protocol as required by the change to the playoff structure.
3. The four highest-ranked conference champions will be seeded one through four and each will receive a first-round bye.
4. The other eight teams will play in the first round with the higher seeds hosting the lower seeds either on campus or at other sites designated by the higher-seeded institution (No. 12 at No. 5, No. 11 at No. 6, No. 10 at No. 7 and No. 9 at No. 8.)

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5. The model allows for first-round games to be played on either the second or third weekend in December in a way that best accommodates the format and the participating teams, with at least 12 days between the conference championship games and the first-round games. The Management Committee would make the final determination of the calendar.
6. Subject to reaching agreement with bowls, the four quarterfinal games and two Playoff Semifinal games would be played in bowls on a rotating basis.
7. The national championship game will continue to be played at a neutral site.
8. Subject to reaching agreement with bowls, the four highest-ranked conference champions will be assigned to quarterfinals bowls on selection day in ranking order, and in consideration of current contract bowl relationships if those bowls are selected for the rotation. For example, if the Pac-12 champion were ranked #1, the Big Ten champion were ranked #3, and the Rose Bowl were a quarterfinal site, the Pac-12 champion would be assigned to the Rose Bowl and the Big Ten champion would be assigned elsewhere.
9. With the four highest-ranked champions assigned to quarterfinal games in bowls, the opponent from first-round game winners will be assigned by the selection committee based on the bracket.
10. The higher seeds would receive preferential placement in the Playoff Semifinal games.
11. First-round games will not have title or presenting sponsors and existing venue signage will remain in place. The CFP will control the video boards.

“I’m very pleased we were able to get this accomplished and I look forward to expansion taking place,” Keenum said. “The four-team playoff has been highly popular and successful. I believe this new format will be even more popular and successful.”

Members of the CFP Board of Managers are Timothy Caboni – Conference USA (President, Western Kentucky); Jim Clements – Atlantic Coast Conference (President, Clemson); Gordon Gee – Big 12 Conference (President, West Virginia); Jack Hawkins – Sun Belt Conference (President, Troy); Rev. John Jenkins – President, Notre Dame (Independent); Kristina Johnson – Big Ten Conference (President, Ohio State); Mark Keenum (chair) – Southeastern Conference (President, Mississippi State); Kirk Schulz – Pacific-12 Conference (President, Washington State); Satish Tripathi – Mid-American Conference (President, Buffalo); Gerald Turner – American Athletic Conference (President, SMU); Keith Whitfield – Mountain West Conference (President, UNLV).

For more information on the CFP, visit [www.collegefootballplayoff.com](http://www.collegefootballplayoff.com).

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#### **About the College Football Playoff**

The College Football Playoff matches the No. 1 ranked team vs. No. 4, and No. 2 vs. No. 3 in semifinal games that rotate annually among six bowl games – the Goodyear Cotton Bowl, Vrbo Fiesta Bowl, Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl, Capital One Orange Bowl, Allstate Sugar Bowl and Rose Bowl Game. This season’s Playoff Semifinals will take place Saturday, December 31, 2022, at the Vrbo Fiesta Bowl and Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl. The Los Angeles region will host the College Football Playoff National Championship on Monday, January 9, 2023, at SoFi Stadium.

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