

College Football Playoff Media Conference

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Boo Corrigan

CFP Media Conference

BRETT DANIELS: I'd like to welcome everyone to the penultimate College Football Playoff Selection Committee teleconference for the 2022 season. Joining us tonight is Bill Hancock, the executive director of the College Football Playoff, along with Boo Corrigan, College Football Playoff Selection Committee chair.

At this time we'll jump into questions and answers.

Q. Boo, we all obviously saw the Ohio State-Michigan game and the second half in particular went bad for Ohio State. What's your view of that game? Was it more that it was a blowout 45-23 or it was a close game until it got out of hand at the end? Also kind of a second part of that, how much does the committee try to guard against recency bias?

BOO CORRIGAN: The recency bias is something we do talk about on a regular basis to make sure as we're going through this that we're looking at everything and looking at the full body of work. It was talked about in the committee room that going into really early in the fourth quarter the game was still close.

That being said, you can't completely dismiss the way the fourth quarter ended with Michigan kind of taking over the game there late.

There's a lot of respect for Ohio State in the room and the wins they've had this year, so again, taking the full body of work, it was certainly something we looked at, but it wasn't, it's a blowout, let's move on.

Q. What caused the committee to when they reevaluated this week jump Utah up three spots as opposed to Washington only one spot, which changed the order of those two teams?

BOO CORRIGAN: As we looked at it, Utah's win over Southern Cal as Southern Cal continues to move up as well as the win over Oregon State, a couple of their losses to UCLA and Oregon. I think the other side of it is the



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Washington loss at Arizona State was surprising to everyone in the room. But when you're looking at the entire body of work, you've got to take everything into account.

As we talked about it and talked over those Pac-12 teams in that area, it was a topic of conversation, and that Arizona State loss really stood out.

Q. This is what it's all about, right, Michigan winning on the road at Ohio State and Georgia at home against Georgia Tech, I'm just curious about the conversations. You keep Georgia at No. 1; how vehement were those conversations, and why did you conclude the way you did?

BOO CORRIGAN: Well, again, a lot of conversation specifically about that, the Georgia-Michigan and Michigan's big win on Saturday. Again, Georgia did nothing against Georgia Tech for people to look at that game in a way that it was a watershed moment, if you will, for Georgia. Georgia over the entire season, the win over Oregon, the win over Tennessee, the win over South Carolina and Mississippi State gives them four wins over teams ranked in the top 25, and Michigan, even with that win, has a win over Ohio State as well as a win over Michigan, two great wins, but the four wins versus the two wins, taking over the whole body of work, we ended up with Georgia No. 1 and Michigan No. 2.

Q. How secure is TCU's place in the field regardless of outcome Saturday? And with Ohio State 5 and a pair of SEC teams 6 and 7, is that more based on Ohio State just having one loss, or did anything come into play the fact that Ohio State plays one additional conference game versus the regular -- in the regular season versus the SEC?

BOO CORRIGAN: I'll try to remember the first question.

Q. About TCU.

BOO CORRIGAN: As we looked at TCU, we have them as the No. 3 team in the country, 12-0, 6-0 against teams .500 or better, some real quality wins that they have, and they continue to win games. They continue to find ways to win



games. Their defense has gotten stronger and stronger, and really where we are this week, where do we have them this week, and we have them clearly at No. 3 this week.

As for the second question, give it to me again, please.

Q. The Big Ten plays nine conference games, the SEC plays eight conference games; did that factor in at all in the Ohio State 5 versus say an Alabama or Tennessee 5 or is it based on Ohio State 11-1 versus other teams are 10-2?

BOO CORRIGAN: What we're doing has nothing to do with conferences. We don't look at that from that standpoint it could come into play around strength of schedule, those types of things, but it's not something we sit there and how many conference games teams are playing. We try to evaluate every team on an individual basis as we go through this, and as we looked at it, Ohio State and their two good wins over Penn State and over Notre Dame overshadowed Alabama and Tennessee from the standpoint of two close losses for Alabama, a couple good wins over Texas and Mississippi State, and then with regards to Tennessee, I think that loss against South Carolina really weighed with the committee.

Q. I wanted to go back to Utah and Washington briefly. You cited that Utah had beaten USC and Oregon State while Washington had lost to Arizona State. Did it come into play at all the fact that Washington has beaten Oregon but Utah has lost to Oregon?

BOO CORRIGAN: It's part of what we talk about. Again, from a Washington standpoint, they've got a win over Oregon and a win over Oregon State. But when you take in the full body of work as we were looking at it, two really good teams, both of whom had really good wins, and you're looking for a differentiator as we go through this, and as we did, that Arizona State game really stood out as kind of one that didn't measure up, if you will, to the other games.

Q. My question is about Alabama and Tennessee; they are one spot apart. Tennessee beat them head-to-head, and usually that's supposed to be one of the determining factors. Is Alabama ahead of Tennessee because Tennessee -- the magnitude of Tennessee's loss to South Carolina and losing its quarterback Hendon Hooker, and is there anything that could change that evaluation in the final standings?

BOO CORRIGAN: Well, one, it was very much debated amongst the committee, and a lot of conversation around that. The value of head-to-head is certainly one of the criteria that we look at. We're looking at a full body of

work, and when you look at their two losses by Alabama, including one on a last-second field goal to Tennessee, and then you're measuring -- somewhere in there you've got to measure the loss that Tennessee had to South Carolina, and as we went through that, that was part of the determination as to why to have Alabama ahead of Tennessee.

Q. Could that change in the final -- could it change?

BOO CORRIGAN: We deal with where we are right now. There's a number of championship games to be played, and we'll deal with the championship games and everything from that point moving forward.

Q. This is maybe more of a philosophical question, those it does apply to this field. When you have a top 4 that are all playing in conference championship games and then you have a team or teams, the only ones that could plausibly move into the top 4 that are not playing in conference championship games, you referred to that as a "bonus game" on the broadcast, but I guess it wouldn't be a bonus to a team that lost and then got pulled out of the top 4.

Is the committee open to that? Would the committee be comfortable holding that 13th game against a team that had won and I guess sort of rewarding a team that had lost and had not played that 13th game? How does the committee look at that?

BOO CORRIGAN: As we look at that, we're going to come back in here on Friday and get together and watch games on Friday and Saturday and go back into the room and make sure that we select the right four teams, and quite frankly the right 25 teams to be ranked, and certainly that's going to be part of their body of work. That championship game will be part of their body of work. That will be part of the determination as we go through this whole process.

Q. I was curious if you could talk about the committee's discussion between Ohio State and USC at 4 and 5. Obviously you were asked about the recency bias, but two losses to highly ranked teams; what was the differentiation there?

BOO CORRIGAN: Well, I mean, Ohio State has nice wins over Penn State and Notre Dame, and again, that Michigan game was a whole lot closer early in the fourth quarter than it was, but then you look at USC and their recent wins over UCLA and Notre Dame, they also have a win over Oregon State. Their one loss is, you probably remember this, a two-point conversion against Utah in an emotionally charged game.

As we looked at the full body of work of both teams, we came out with USC in the No. 4 spot and Ohio State in the No. 5 spot.

Q. It sounds like -- can you characterize how close it is between Georgia and Michigan for the 1 seed? And does the quality of the win or the loss, if they win, does the size of the outcome matter in the conference championship games for spots like 1, 2 and 3?

BOO CORRIGAN: Well, the second part, that would have me projecting into what's going to happen next week, and we'll deal with that as we get together as a group next week. On the first part, these are all really good football teams that we're talking about right now. To be in the top 25 at this time of year, much less to be in the top 2 this time of year, there's a lot of discussion about everything about it.

You've got a guy, Blake Corum, who's injured in the game and then Donovan Edwards comes in and has a great game. It's all part of the total package of what it is and the job that Coach Smart and Coach Harbaugh have done this year is really great, as with all the coaches.

Q. Just to follow up, you mentioned the two-point conversion in the Utah-USC game was the deciding factor between USC and Ohio State, the fact that USC had lost a very close game whereas Ohio State had a 22-point loss?

BOO CORRIGAN: No, I think you've got to take into account the way USC is playing right now, the wins over UCLA, the win over Notre Dame, the win over Oregon State earlier in the year, and you need to measure that against Penn State -- I'm sorry, Ohio State and their win over Penn State and Notre Dame. Again, it's a full body of work, but it was more a point of we're looking at every aspect of both teams and trying to make the best determination.

Q. Regarding USC, how much did the win over Notre Dame sway -- I don't know if sway is the right term, but in the conversation regarding USC, how much of a factor was that victory Saturday night?

BOO CORRIGAN: Well, I mean, it's a top-25 win. As they go into it, it better adds to their body of work as a team and as a program and the job that they've done this year. Again, it's a piece of it and everything that goes into it, but it gives them -- coming off of UCLA, it gives them back-to-back big wins for USC.

The job that Caleb did in that game, Caleb Williams, he's a player. I think all that together is why we ended up with

USC at 4.

Q. Was it a fairly easy decision to put them at 4, or was there some debate?

BOO CORRIGAN: There isn't a whole lot easy about any of this that we're doing. We're going over this again and again and making sure that we're spending time and getting everyone's opinion of the 13 people on the committee and making sure that we're all together making the right decisions.

Q. Did I hear you right on the show that you confirmed that Ohio State and Alabama would not change spots; they're going to stay where they are?

BOO CORRIGAN: No, I did not.

Q. I thought you said that on the show, that because Ohio State and Alabama are not going to play this weekend, their order would not change. Not that they wouldn't move spots, but Ohio State was going to stay ahead of Alabama?

BOO CORRIGAN: No, ma'am.

Q. Being NC State's athletic director, I wanted to ask you about head-to-heads. Can you explain to NC State fans and fans of Tennessee when head-to-head matters and why it doesn't sometimes?

BOO CORRIGAN: You're looking at a total body of work as we go into it, and specifically to the Alabama-Tennessee game, and you need to take everything into account, and it certainly is part of what we do. It's one of the factors; it's not the only factor we have. We're trying to get the entire body of work, use Alabama-Tennessee -- the outlier would be the Tennessee loss to South Carolina as opposed to two close losses by Alabama.

I think that was the determining factor there.

In our game, this is me as the AD, not as the chairman of the committee, because I'm not in the room when NC State is discussed. But as I went back into the room, the discussion was around us winning, NC State winning that game against Carolina, but NC State also has a loss, one additional loss, that one loss being to Boston College, and that was a determining factor to the committee.

Q. I think there is a little bit of confusion because when you were asked you on the show, he did say nothing could change as far as how those teams who were done for the season would stack up against one

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

another, and you said, "correct." It did sound like Ohio State will stay ahead of Alabama and Alabama will stay ahead of Tennessee. You're saying that's not necessarily the case?

BOO CORRIGAN: I apologize if there's any confusion on that. I apologize. No, that's not necessarily the case. I apologize if there is confusion.

Q. The question I've got, obviously -- of course we all lived through 2007 and the chaos that ensued at the end of that BCS year, but is there a line where if chaos ensues, Ohio State could move up, Alabama could move up into the top 4? Is there any chance that you see Tennessee moving into the top 4, or is that kind of the line between Alabama and Tennessee?

BOO CORRIGAN: I think that's a segment of what we're going to see this weekend is all the games, and we're going to see how it all plays out and be able to make our decisions next week and get back on a phone call with y'all explaining them.

Q. On the show, not by you but on the show, it was suggested that Hendon Hooker's injury had something to do with the rankings of Tennessee; is that figured into it when a key player is out with an injury to determine the value of the team?

BOO CORRIGAN: Well, I'll go backwards to last week in terms of South Carolina game. It was certainly something that we considered during the game, and if you remember correctly, I believe they were down 49-31 at the time when he went out. We do have more information on their game based on with Vanderbilt, and we go off of what we've seen so far.

Q. So is Tennessee's ranking any different if Hendon Hooker is healthy now?

BOO CORRIGAN: Don't know. Don't know. That's speculation on our side. Again, we're taking the body of work that they have and the most recent game they had with Vanderbilt.

Q. Just to continue with the Tennessee discussion, especially with Hendon Hooker, obviously hurt against South Carolina, out for the remainder of the year. Tennessee responded pretty well, 56-0 win at Vanderbilt, especially the Commodores coming off back to back wins against Kentucky and Florida. How is that viewed as a win for Tennessee as a whole? Is that simply just a system-type win, offensive system under Josh Heupel or just a good performance with the backup quarterback?

BOO CORRIGAN: It was a good win by a football team is what it was, as we looked at it, and certainly there's respect for Tennessee in the room, which is why they ended up ranked where they were, at No. 7.

Q. I was going to ask you about injuries, but let me change course here. Michigan opened its passing game up in the first half against Ohio State, and I was wondering if that changed the committee's perception of Michigan. You've described them as workmanlike over the course of the last couple weeks and the fact that they showed that with J.J. McCarthy.

BOO CORRIGAN: I think they continued to be who they are and find ways to win games, and Coach Harbaugh has done a great job with that program, and they saw a different way to do it and did it in a different way this past week. Everyone was very impressed by Michigan's performance on Saturday down at Ohio State, and we ended up with them at No. 2.

BRETT DANIELS: I'd like to thank everyone at this time for their participation in tonight's call.

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