College Football Playoff Media Conference

Tuesday, November 10, 2026

Irving, Texas, USA

Hunter Yurachek
Rich Clark

CFP Media Conference

ERIC TOSI: Thank you to the members of the media for joining us this evening. On the phone we have CFP Selection Committee chair Hunter Yurchek, and executive director of the CFP, Rich Clark.

Today's format will be brief opening remarks from Hunter followed by the Q&A.

HUNTER YURACHEK: Good evening. Thank you for joining us. Because of the late start to this, I'll try to be a little briefer with my opening comments than I was last week.

Last week we said there would be a lot of movement in these rankings, and there certainly was. Not a single team is in the same spot that they held last week. We knew Saturday was going to be exciting, and it lived up to the hype. There were seven games amongst the teams in the CFP top 25, those drove the most significant changes on the board.

We have a new No. 1 and a new No. 2. Georgia moves to the top spot after a dominant 42-7 win at Ole Miss. Utah is 9-1 after beating BYU. Alabama moves up through 3 after its impressive road win at LSU. UCLA, the only other undefeated team in the poll and country, is now No. 4 after defeating Minnesota on the road.

Notre Dame made one of the biggest moves of the week. We said last week that they had an opportunity to get a marquee win, and they did, beating the No. 1 team in the country in Miami.

Tennessee climbs five spots to No. 8 after its dominant win over Kentucky. Oregon jumps seven spots to 16 after winning at Ohio State.

When the teams around you lose in the rankings and win big games, it affects where you land. Even in the week you didn't lose or in some cases like Indiana didn't play, those are some of the toughest conversations in the room and why we saw such significant movement.

Oklahoma State makes its first appearance in our rankings at No. 25, and Boise State remains the highest ranked team from the Group of 6 at 24.

As always, this ranking is a snapshot of where things stand today based on a team's full body of work. That is an important reminder that the Selection Committee evaluates team on their full body of work, their full profile, not a single metric or statistic.

Still a quarter of the season left to play and a lot will happen over the next three weeks, and championship weekend, and rankings will surely change even more as we close out the college football season.

Before we get into the Q&A on the eve of Veterans Day, I do want to take a moment to thank and recognize all who have served our country, and that includes the CFP's executive director Rich Clark, who served nearly 40 years in the United States Air Force, rose to get rank of lieutenant general. Thank you to Rich and thank you to all of our veterans of the military for your service and leadership to our country.

With that we'll take some questions.

Q. Hunter, I wanted to ask about UCLA. Obviously a big jump off an impressive road win. What did you see going from 8 to 4? Maybe is it a little bit of an admission they were ranked too low last week?

HUNTER YURACHEK: I don't think it was an admission of them being ranked too low. I think what we are seeing with the parity around college football that we now have only two remaining unbeaten teams, and UCLA is one of those.

I think they continue to improve as a team. The defense has been steady and really dominant all season. They've had an established running game. Their quarterback play is getting better. Their backup quarterback that has been filling in really seemed to find his way, especially in the fourth quarter of that game against Minnesota.

You look at that's a Minnesota team that went to Indiana and took Indiana to overtime the week prior. That's a Minnesota team that had beaten Iowa on that same field. UCLA winning there, looked like the No. 4 ranked team in the country winning that game by two scores.

A credit to UCLA. They continue to win games and are one of our two remaining unbeaten teams in the country.

Q. The top pod, the separators for Georgia at No. 1, how close those top three or four teams are?

HUNTER YURACHEK: I think we rely a lot on the analytics. But in the case of Georgia, we rely a lot on watching film and watching their game.

The game that they had this past weekend at Ole Miss was just a dominating performance. They looked very much like the Georgia team we have seen play every game this year, with the exception of the Auburn game.

The committee is very high on Georgia. They've got great analytics. But I think more than that, just watching that team and how they function defensively, what Gunner Stockton means to that team offensively. That's just a really complete team that the committee is very high on.

Q. Hunter, you said Indiana was tough. They moved down five after not playing. Can you discuss the convo on that and the reasons for it.

HUNTER YURACHEK: Absolutely. Great question.

Indiana was probably the victim of having a bye week at the wrong time, a time where there were seven games within our top 25. Some of those big wins occurred right around where they were, starting with Notre Dame's big win over Miami, Texas over Missouri, UCLA win on the road and beat a Minnesota team, a Minnesota team that had gone to Indiana the week prior. Indiana needed a 60-yard field goal as time expired to send that game into overtime and win that game.

The committee is impressed with what UCLA, Texas and Notre Dame did, as well as Alabama obviously with their big win at LSU.

Every team that Indiana played, had played to date in the Big Ten, they all lost. So they this six losses that went against their record strength as well as their strength of schedule. Those metrics affected the committee's review of Indiana this week, as well.

Q. Hunter, Indiana's uncertainty at quarterback last couple weeks with the injury, kind of going forward, play any role? How did that impact the discussions that you had?

HUNTER YURACHEK: I mean, obviously the quarterback play in general, the offensive play in general, is a discussion point there for Indiana. They're a dominant defensive team. One of the best, if not the best, defensive teams statistically in the country. They have won games because of their defense, not because of their offense.

That is a point of discussion in the room when we are comparing them to other teams.

Q. I was curious if you can discuss how the committee views Miami's résumé now after both the loss to Notre Dame and in light of the absence of Malachi Toney for the near future?

HUNTER YURACHEK: We only have one game to evaluate Miami without Malachi Toney. So we can only use that metric.

I will say let's give credit to Miami and the way they played in that game because they found out about Malachi Toney, my understanding, is on Wednesday, most of their great many prep for Notre Dame was done before that happened. Notre Dame jumped out to a 24-3 lead. Miami cut to it 7 on a couple of occasions.

Then some things that happened around Miami in the rankings, we talked about that. Georgia had their big win at Ole Miss. Utah, their win over BYU. Alabama won at LSU, Texas at Missouri, UCLA at Minnesota. You had that combination of Miami losing as the No. 1 team, then some five teams behind them having some really signature wins. The committee thought that moving those teams ahead of Miami was the right thing to do in this ranking.

We still have a lot of respect for Miami. They have a lot of talent. Their offense seemed to find their way. They hit the tight end I think for nine receptions in that game, had another receiver that caught seven. A lot of talent on that team with or without Malachi Toney.

Q. Hunter, Texas Tech, up three spots this week from No. 15 to No. 12. Address maybe the key factors in that. Also BYU and Kentucky are the two teams in front of them, both with two losses. What were the differentiating factors that kept those two teams above Texas Tech?

HUNTER YURACHEK: I mean, Texas Tech first of all they got an 8-1 record. Got a lot of respect from the committee. They benefited from some teams losing above them, the rankings that moved them up three spots. Compared to

Kentucky and BYU, Texas Tech strength of schedule by our metrics, currently 65, Kentucky is 8 and BYU is 24.

They all three have two quality wins. Texas Tech beat Houston and Arizona. Kentucky has beaten LSU and South Carolina. BYU has beaten Notre Dame and Arizona.

You look at the losses. Texas Tech's one loss is to a 5-4 Cincinnati team. BYU lost obviously this past weekend to our No. 2 ranked team in Utah. Also has a loss to UCF. Kentucky has two losses to Alabama, who is ranked third, and Tennessee, who is ranked eighth.

That's how we compared those teams and came up with BYU at 10, Kentucky at 11, and Texas Tech at 12.

Q. You said Alabama and Tennessee are in different podiums or pools. Could you give some clarification on the size of each pod. Are we to understand that Alabama is in the top pod and Tennessee is in the second pod or more levels than that?

HUNTER YURACHEK: It goes a lot deeper. I could get in the weeds for several hours on this.

I think the definitive difference between the two teams right now, Alabama and Tennessee, why they're not being compared side by side, even though Tennessee has that win over Alabama, is Alabama's got four really good wins in the view of the committee, at LSU, at Kentucky, versus South Carolina, and at Mississippi State back in September that was undefeated.

Alabama, the highest ranked team they played is 84. Tennessee has three wins over teams that are 101, 119 and 131. Tennessee has losses to a very good Texas team and a very good South Carolina team.

When you compare those, we feel like Tennessee has two really good wins, Alabama and Kentucky. You have to search a little deeper to find their next best win. We feel like Alabama now has four really good wins. That's been the separator, and kept them from having that side-by-side comparison right now in our rankings.

Q. I wanted to ask about what went into the decision to have Oregon be the top ranked three-loss team over the other group of the 6-3 teams.

HUNTER YURACHEK: Yeah, so I'm assuming you're talking about Oregon versus Ohio State, Ole Miss, LSU, Missouri, teams like that.

We feel like Oregon has wins over Ohio State, UFC and Boise State that are currently in our top 25. Their losses are to our fourth-ranked team in UCLA, our 25th-ranked team in Oklahoma State, then to a very good 6-3 team in Illinois.

We feel like Oregon over the past two weeks with a new offensive coordinator is really using the talent they have on the offensive side of the ball to their advantage. They put up some big numbers the last two games offensively.

Going to Ohio State and winning that game, it's a really tough place to play. Ohio State doesn't lose many games in Columbus. Oregon, after getting down 14-0 scored 38 straight points.

When you look at the other 6-3 teams, Ole Miss got blown by Georgia at home. LSU lost a game at home. Ohio State obviously lost at Oregon. When you compare those 6-3 teams, that's why we put Oregon ahead of them.

Q. In regards to Miami, kind of in general, does the committee take into consideration how a team plays for one part of the game if they recover the second half of the game? Miami is an example. They did not play well in the first half, played better in the second half. Does the committee take that into consideration or look at the whole picture of the game?

HUNTER YURACHEK: Absolutely. We're looking at the entire picture of the game. The committee watched that game, was well aware that Notre Dame was up 24-3. Miami cut that lead on two occasions to 7. They had a potential touchdown that was ruled not a touchdown by the officials. We're cognizant of the flow of the game, what happened in the game, that Miami got down and came back.

The fact that they lost that game, again, was just one of the pieces to the puzzle to move them back to 7. But there's some things that happened right behind them with Georgia, Utah, Alabama, Texas and UCLA that the committee felt like they deserved to be ahead of Miami, along obviously with Notre Dame.

Q. What does the committee like about South Carolina and would allow them to make the move they made this week?

HUNTER YURACHEK: I mean, South Carolina's playing very good football right now. They've got a dynamic quarterback that really has that offense running very well. They have a win over our eighth-ranked team in Tennessee. They also have what we believe are quality wins against Oklahoma, Florida and Texas A&M. So that's four wins versus top-40 teams.

They're trending in a really good direction right now. They've got a loss to a Kentucky team, two-point conversion, one-point loss. We think very highly of Kentucky as well. That's what we see in South Carolina right now.

Q. I wanted to see what impressed the committee as far as USC is concerned, and if they are able to win out their final three games, what are the specifics that the committee will be looking at, having the opportunity to be in the CFP?

HUNTER YURACHEK: Obviously USC has a really quality win against Ohio State, when Ohio State a couple weeks ago, they're 7-2. They do have some opportunities ahead of themselves to really move up in these rankings. Southern Cal is a team that I think we all should keep an eye on. They've got some great opportunities ahead of themselves.

Q. In explaining one of the differences between Alabama and Tennessee, you used Mississippi State as a quality win. At the time Jeff Lubby said after the game that it was pretty obvious Kamario couldn't do anything with his legs, Fluff Bothwell only had one carry. Are injuries being considered in considering naming Mississippi State a quality win?

HUNTER YURACHEK: I don't know that we've listened to Jeff Lubby's interviews. But Kamario Taylor played in that game, and Alabama dominated that game. Mississippi State at the time was 4-0, on everybody's radar screen in college football.

Q. This is a Group of 6 question. What is the spread between Boise State and New Mexico? Where do you have New Mexico right now?

HUNTER YURACHEK: Well, we don't have New Mexico in our rankings. They were in our pool. They did have an opportunity to get compared with Boise State.

We feel like Boise State right now, based on a really competitive game against Oregon. We know New Mexico had a really competitive game on the road. Boise has some other games on the schedule that we like going on the road and beating a good Western Michigan game. They have a win over Fresno, Memphis, win over a Texas State team that's coming on strong.

We just think the quality of wins and their strength of schedule that Boise State has compared to New Mexico, who is a really good team, especially on the defensive side of the ball, right now Boise State has, because they're 24th, has an edge over New Mexico.

Q. Do you think you're overrating Utah and UCLA? They're undefeated, but they have among the poorest strengths of schedules in the top 15.

HUNTER YURACHEK: I think we watch Utah play, they are a dynamic team on both sides of the ball. They've got a really special quarterback that does some special things. They have a defense that's doing some special things.

I talk about, the committee's talked about, discussed, the parity that exists in college football. This is one of the earliest dates there's only been two undefeated teams remaining. I think there's something to be said for winning games. UCLA and Utah have won every challenge that has been put ahead of them. They're being rewarded for that right now.

Q. You discussed BYU, maybe why they're above Texas Tech right now. How would BYU to this point, snapshot in time, how much did it help them avoid a bigger fall down the rankings the fact that Notre Dame beat Miami, a team that BYU defeated earlier this season?

HUNTER YURACHEK: Definitively. I mean, when you have a win over now what is our top five team, fifth ranked team, that is a feather in the cap for BYU.

They played really a competitive game against Utah. Got down 14 points, went up 20-14. Utah came back and ended up winning that game. BYU had a couple chances late. Threw that interception down on the goal line. A great play by the linebacker from Utah.

The committee has a lot of respect for BYU. Their win over Notre Dame, how they played against Utah. They stubbed their toe against Central Florida. That's been kind of the theme throughout college football this year, that you win a big game, then you stub your toe the next week.

Q. Teams like Wake Forest and Texas Tech, in terms of how they play, if anything, is in their hands, what can they do down the line?

HUNTER YURACHEK: Just keep winning football games. Keep winning football games and hope there's some movement above them. Still three weeks left in the regular season, championship weekend. There's going to be some continued movement within this poll as I said in my opening remarks.

There's not a team ranked this week that is ranked in the same spot they were last week. I think some of that will

continue to show its course in what has been a really special college football season.

Q. What can you add to Texas, speaking about their quality wins, you're looking at Ohio State over Tennessee, Ole Miss, Mississippi State, recently Missouri. Just the reasoning, despite the two losses, of why they would be below a Notre Dame which has one ranked win and a UCLA team that's undefeated but didn't have the type of schedule that Texas has had?

HUNTER YURACHEK: I think the committee obviously has a great deal of respect for Texas and what they've accomplished. They sit as our No. 6 team. They have two losses that are two unranked team to Florida and OU.

I think the committee has given Texas a lot of respect in spite of those two losses to unranked teams because of the quality of their schedule and the wins they have over Tennessee, Ole Miss, Ohio State and Missouri.

ERIC TOSI: Thank you to the members of the media for joining us this evening.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports