

College Football Playoff Media Conference

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Boo Corrigan

CFP Media Conference



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BRETT DANIELS: I'd like to welcome everybody to the fourth College Football Playoff Selection Committee teleconference for the 2022 season. Joining us again here tonight will be Bill Hancock, the executive director of the College Football Playoff, along with Boo Corrigan, the College Football Playoff committee chair.

At this time we'll go into our Q&A segment.

Q. I'm trying to get my head around LSU being ranked ahead of Clemson. They each have a blowout loss, LSU to Tennessee, Clemson to Notre Dame, both top-15 teams, but LSU has that loss, virtual home loss to Florida State, a team that Clemson beat on the road. How much do you consider common opponents as far as ranking those two teams? We talked about it and you told me a few weeks ago that the committee values that Clemson win over NC State as a legitimate top-10, top-15 win because they had Devin Leary at that time. Nobody in the national media is giving Clemson credit for that win as a quality win. Does the committee continue to value that win over NC State as a top-10 or top-15 win?

BOO CORRIGAN: Let me try to take the first one. Again, we're looking for growth during the course of the season, and LSU since that loss to Florida State and the way that they've played and the way they've continued to improve, the win over Alabama, the convincing win over Mississippi are two things that we've really looked at.

With regard to Clemson, yeah, it does matter. 6-1 against teams over .500; the two ranked teams are in there. But as we looked at it in the comparable to the Notre Dame loss in South Bend 35-14 and how that game kind of went down as each member of the committee who was watching it and studying it and looking at everything came back with the conclusion that we saw LSU at 5 and Clemson at 8.

Q. How much conversation or debate is there among the committee members about TCU being higher either ahead of Michigan at No. 3 or possibly all the way up

to No. 2 over Ohio State?

BOO CORRIGAN: There's conversation. Every week we go through it and make sure that the first thing we do is look at 1 through 4 and make sure that we're comparing it and looking at the games from the previous week as well as both offense and defense. When you look at the balance of Ohio State, the balance of Michigan, TCU is 8-0 against teams above .500, which is really impressive, and it's been impressive to the committee, but again, as we look at their ability to come back in games where to a large degree Ohio State and Michigan have not, and as I said last week, that win over Notre Dame by Ohio State is an impressive second wind on top of the Penn State win.

Q. I wanted to ask about UCF; they lost to Navy this weekend. What kind of discussion was there about keeping UCF in the top 25 and how close was it?

BOO CORRIGAN: Yeah, still two really good wins over Tulane and over Cincinnati. The defense has been strong. The 17-14 loss to Navy where Navy controls the ball, it's a different kind of game that you're playing in that respect. But they've had a really good season. Coach Malzahn has done a really good job, and clearly there's a lot of respect from the committee for UCF to drop two spots.

Q. I'm curious, as soon as we get to the point where we're comparing a one-loss Clemson to a one-loss Big Ten team, how did the committee decide to put Louisville in the top 25 over Illinois or Purdue or Iowa or Minnesota when particularly Illinois and Purdue have a common opponent with Louisville that they both fared better than Louisville did?

BOO CORRIGAN: Yeah, Louisville has won five of the last six games. They're 5-3 against teams ranked above .500. They also have that win over UCF. Two of their losses were to Florida State and Clemson, and the comparable in making sure that we're going through the teams quite frankly that are in that 7-4 area and making sure that we're doing all we can to figure out which ones deserve in there. But there's no talk of conference or any of that in what we're doing. We're trying to find the best 25 teams.

Q. I wanted to ask you, how do you value Clemson's



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resume overall, and also, when the committee looks at this, the value of a one-loss conference champion and then also how you guys value a one-loss nonconference champion?

BOO CORRIGAN: You know, protocol, conference championships are part of what we talk about, so from that standpoint, clearly I'm not going to project forward as it relates to that.

But a really good football team. I think it's trying to figure out what stands out for them. Really good defensive line, really good defensively with what they've done 6-1 against teams over .500. Again, I know this can sound repetitive, but in watching them, you're looking for something that makes them different, makes them stand out. In that respect Coach Swinney has done a great job again this year with his team, but the committee views them as the No. 8 team.

Q. What is separating USC and LSU right now, USC with just the one loss by one point?

BOO CORRIGAN: Well, we talked a lot about it, is what I would say before anything else, and made sure that it wasn't a single conversation. It came up over and over again to make sure, and there's reasons for both teams, but the committee at the end of the day saw the wins over Alabama and Mississippi as stronger than the wins over UCLA and Oregon State.

One area we still have questions on is the strength of the defense of USC, and looking at it in its entirety, we believe that LSU deserved to be ranked 5 and SC 6.

Q. I was wondering if you could go into any more specifics about what you want to see from USC's defense, and I also wanted to ask you what the committee thinks about Clemson's offense specifically.

BOO CORRIGAN: Well, the SC defense, that's projecting into what it is, but again, when you look at that game, and what a great game it was, 48-45, I think we're looking for a stronger showing by the defense. As a committee, a more dominant win in those situations to continue to move forward.

Will Shipley from Clemson is a dynamic player for them. I think they've had maybe a little bit of ups and downs with regards to the quarterback position that we've talked about in the room. But again, a really good team that's had a really good year, and through week 12 that's our evaluation.

Q. Gentlemen, I was wondering if any conversation came up during your debates about LSU taking on UAB or Alabama playing Austin Peay this late in the season while you have teams like USC playing at the Rose Bowl against UCLA or Oregon hosting Utah. I know it got a lot of flak on Saturday when Joel Klatt was saying, give me a break, what a joke, about teams playing, quote-unquote, cupcakes this late in the season. I wondered if any of that came up in any of your debates this week.

BOO CORRIGAN: You know, we're really looking at the whole body of work. We're in week 12. People have played different people throughout the season, some stronger than others, and our goal really is to look at the whole resume at this point and make sure that we're evaluating the entire resume instead of one single data point that you can get sucked into at times and making sure that we're making the bigger, broader decision that we have to make and make sure we get that right based on being through week 12.

Q. My question is how much weight did the committee give to Hendon Hooker's injury when ranking Tennessee?

BOO CORRIGAN: Yeah, when you think about the game, it was 49-31 at the time when he went out of the game, and all we can do is evaluate from the start of the game to the end of the game, if you will. While it clearly affected Tennessee at that point, it was 49-31. If I remember correctly, they had a short field as a result of that, and soon after that went up 56-31.

Again, it's something that we did all acknowledge in the room, but it wasn't something that drove us to a different conclusion.

BRETT DANIELS: We'd like to thank everyone for their participation.

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