

# Atlantic Coast Conference Football Kickoff

Tuesday, July 25, 2023

Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

**Jim Phillips Ph.D.**

**Kelsey Riggs**

**Mark Packer**

**Eric Mac Lain**

**E.J. Manuel**

ACC Network Press Conference



were standing up on this stage. It feels nostalgic to be back in this room. We were talking then about building the network and what we would be able to do, so we're excited to be here with another announcement.

You've seen so many of us over the years on the road, and for the first time ever this year we will be taking ACC Huddle and ACC PM on the road every single weekend for the college football season. 37 days away from that first, very first, weekend, Labor Day weekend, and we are pumped about it.

Pack, you guys were on the road with the ACC Huddle crew last year, and it's a huge opportunity to really highlight these student-athletes, these games, and kick it off on Fridays.

MARK PACKER: It is. First of all, I'll be brief. I would like to ask the esteemed media here. I would like to know if any of you actually voted for Vanderbilt last week at the SEC Media Days because if you did, you need to be escorted out immediately. This is a real media congregation for the next three days.

So we look forward to being on the road. We look forward to meeting with all the coaches and players just like you guys do. It should be fun for the next three days. It should be a great '23 season as well.

We look forward to getting back to the College Football Playoff, whether it be Clemson, Florida State, or somebody else. We look forward to being on the road and talking to ACC football, a little southern fried football.

SO, again, if you are voting Vandy like you did last week, get your mind right for the next three days, and we look forward to having and fun with you.

KELSEY RIGGS: If you know any good tailgate spots, Pack is really good on the grill, and he can come help you and feed everybody.

Looking forward to that. They'll be there on Fridays and Saturdays throughout the college football season, as mentioned, every single week for the first time. Just an

JIM PHILLIPS: I know that I'll see a bunch of you throughout the next couple of days, but let me at this time invite our partners from the ACC Network to the stage for a special announcement. Where is our ACCN family members? As they make their way up here and with the ACC football season kicking off in 37 days, here's a quick video.

(Video played.)

JIM PHILLIPS: Kelsey Riggs has been part of the ACCN since it went live on August 22, 2019, and we're so proud she continues to be an incredible ambassador for the ACC and ACCN and ESPN.

Ms. Riggs, come on up here. Let's give her a nice round of applause.

(Applause.)

KELSEY RIGGS: Hello, hello. Let's see if I can do this. Great to be with everybody. As you mentioned, I'm Kelsey Riggs, and I know you guys probably know all of these familiar faces coming up on stage as well.

Mark Packer has the other microphone right now, part of the ACC PM crew with Taylor Tannebaum. Then we have Eric Mac Lain, former Clemson standout, E.J. Manuel from Florida State, Eddie Royal from Virginia Tech, and the newly-elected Hall of Famer Coach Mark Richt.

We are so excited to be here with you. Yeah, that deserves a round of applause. Excited to be here with you. As the Commissioner mentioned, August of 2019 -- yeah, so four years ago; math is hard -- so many of us

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opportunity to continue to highlight football and grow football and all the teams in this conference.

That's just part of it, though. The Commissioner mentioned five straight days of ACC football, which is a huge deal to have that opportunity. We're going to kick off our trip with Virginia Tech. It is our primetime game. Nothing like Lane Stadium when that "Enter Sandman" gets rocking, and that will be Old Dominion for the very first weekend of the college football season.

E-Mac to have the opportunity to be there to cover these teams up close and personal. And it's not just a pregame or postgame. No, it's all day long. It's morning, noon, night, all throughout the day.

ERIC MAC LAIN: First of all, it's awesome to be back here. Eight years ago I stood on that podium as a student-athlete, and to see how this thing has grown and to have this awesome crew that I'm standing here with, an amazing TV partner that we work for, and just to see the continual growth of this conference is very inspiring for me.

All that we just mentioned, I mean, how can you not be jacked up as a student-athlete, as a fan, as a media member to have this type of presence every single week? I just think about it. As a former player to have that stage that we're going to have, to have that presence at my facility, at my stadium, it just feels so big, and it is. These student-athletes deserve this credit and this unbelievable coverage we're going to give them.

Can't wait to be at Lane Stadium. Eddie has been there once or twice. It's going to be so much fun and can't wait to deliver all of this content all fall.

KELSEY RIGGS: That will be just part of our coverage for the five straight days of college football. We are going to blow it up. Lots more to get to with that. That is, of course, Labor Day weekend.

Before that we got some other big trips coming. We're taking our ACC summer road trip, our football show goes on the road as well. All of us, some of the others from ACC Network will be there. E.J., we're kicking it off again this year with Florida State going back down to Tallahassee, where it is hot. I will be ready for that this year on August 7th. We'll hit every single school.

That access I think is so valuable. Obviously to continue to highlight the athletes and the coaches and the teams, but also for fans because you're there as they're just weeks away from the start of the season.

E.J. MANUEL: Of course, Kelsey had to come to me about

the Florida State Road Show first. I think it is a great platform for each university and each coach, each player to have us come to their actual practice to watch them for a full day, to walk through their facilities. You can just sense the pride that each coach has.

I remember we went to Wake Forest last year, and Coach Clawson was so gracious to take 30 minutes out of his time to walk us throughout the facility and really show us what he is building with his program. I feel like it's like that with all 14 of our institutions.

It's very prideful for myself as a former player, somebody that played in the ACC Championship game, somebody that played throughout the ACC and chose to go to the ACC. I had other options to go and play, but I wanted to stay in this conference.

So this is where I grew up. To be here still covering it, I'm very extremely proud, but at the same time this is important, like E-Mac said, to give back to these student-athletes and give them the platform they deserve.

KELSEY RIGGS: It is different than anything else we do. We get so many of the players mic'd up while they're practicing. You get to get inside their heads. You get to see sometimes Eddie returning punts and trying to catch it. You see how that goes. Obviously, great interviews with everybody here as well.

We are so excited for all that is in store for ACC football this season. Excited to be a partner and continue to grow this. Mentioned four years ago we were standing here. I can't wait to see where we are four years from now as college football, ACC football continues to grow.

Commissioner, we're looking forward to it.

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