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An Interview With:

**COLLEGE FOOTBALL PLAYOFF
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
MICHAEL KELLY**

MICHAEL KELLY: Thank you. Thanks for the opportunity to be with you today. Clearly there's always a little extra spring in the step as we get closer to the dawn of another college football season.

And this year is certainly no exception. But I would suggest, with the inaugural College Football Playoff just about to occur, it's that more special for this upcoming year. It's been the dream of many to have the college football playoff come about. Something that's been wanted by fans, players, coaches, and the like. And the commissioners listened; they made it happen. It's here.

And, in fact, some would say that the dream has been around for upward of 40 years. If you'll turn your attention to the video screen above, you'll see where that dream might have first been hatched.

(Video)

MICHAEL KELLY: So we just had a little fun with it. Obviously it's about football and it's about a game. But it's funny to see how that dream four years ago really has come true.

We'll spend a few minutes going through about what the playoff is all about. I know you've written about it. I know you know about it. But let's make sure, as we get into it, we have all the facts and figures straight.

First of all, we're talking about the best four teams. That's been reemphasized by the management committee time and time again, will select a committee that will be a part of this process, pick the best four teams to be what we term as the College Football Playoff. Lots and lots of criteria that will go into it, a lot of evaluation. The things you see above you are the ones that will drive the most.

I'll talk about those more specifically in a few minutes when we talk about the selection committee. We think this format has truly found what is the best of all worlds. It has been able to preserve what we know as the best regular season in all of sports.

College football regular season is fantastic, and important for every fan in our country and obviously every game has proven to matter in a big way. That has not changed in this playoff.

We've also found a way to incorporate and maintain college football bowl traditions in terms of making it a part of our semifinal system and have so many more meaningful games as a part of this whole new arrangement.

And lastly, of course, it does not change the parameters about what was so important to our presidents in terms of keeping football in essence a one semester sport by making sure that the academic calendar occurred as it was.

We made all those things happen. Yet also still been able to go to the next level of having a national college football playoff. That's been very, very important.

We are excited about bringing college football back to a real focus and emphasis on the New Year's holiday. It's a real New Year's spectacle. The fact that all six teams involved with have a triple header on New Year's Eve and triple header on New Year's Day, which was talked about in the video really, really speaks to something that's very special.

We're looking to bring a sports holiday, put it on an actual holiday. We think it's obviously not only good for rankings, but it's proven true with many Big Ten bowl relationships in the past.

But it will also be good for travel in terms of fans not necessarily being in a work setting on those days, being able to travel a lot more easily than they were during the BCS era. Something we learned when we started moving away from New Year's Day and some of the things that went along with that.

We're awfully excited about taking this. We think culturally significant in terms of change of



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culture. If you think about watch parties, in terms of how we know the semifinals this year on New Year's Day and other years you'll find two years of rotation it's on New Year's Eve.

When you get together with family and friends you'll now be celebrating the new year, which will be glued and focused in on the college football playoff semifinals. And we're looking forward to that.

We've staked our claim for our national championship game to be on Monday, Monday night prime time. We think that's a great place, worthy location for the championship of our sport. So that will be very good.

What it also does for sports is allows to plan and create and develop an energetic weekend of pure celebration of college football throughout the weekend starting early Friday and the National Championship and carry all the way through the National Championship weekend.

At the end of August we will unveil a full calendar of events that the public can enjoy. But rest assured, it will be -- there will be a new standard as we work to make this become our next great iconic sporting event on American soil.

We'll certainly have a major fan fest that will turn into playoff fan central and have a multi-day news special that will turn to the playoffs live, and many, many other events that we'll unveil at the end of August. We're very, very excited about it.

We talk about the playoff, we talk about universal access. It's not any requirement, as many conferences get into it, no limit to how many can be in it. They're the best four teams. They're playing in the playoffs. That's the way it will be. We're awfully excited about it.

More revenue. Obviously you write about the business of the sport, how important it is for schools and institutions that the conferences have additional revenue. Playoff system allowed us to deliver that, deliver it in a big way.

If you go to collegefootballplayoff.com, on our frequent asked question section, there's a whole layout on the revenue to get into more specifics on this. But for a long story short, I'll give you a couple of bullet points.

Number one, there's an academic component in this initiative that didn't exist before. A school, any FBS school will receive a \$300,000 payment if they meet the APR threshold that exists at that point in time. That's important.

The five power conferences can all base themselves on -- plan on a lease base fee of

\$50 million that they'll be able to share. That's just from the playoff aspect. Obviously the conference has done a great job negotiating their own bowl deals, how that might come into play, add additional revenue on to that.

From the playoff arrangement itself, we're talking \$50 million approximately each. For the group of five conferences, there's an aggregate \$75 million that they'll split and divide as those conference commissions sees fit and make it work. So in each case, much less more revenue in terms of making it happen is certainly part of it.

Unlike every other sport in which the NCAA manages and maintains a championship, this championship is managed by the conferences.

If you're in the BCS, if you have an entity, obviously the conference world involved in the management of the Association of College Football, but this case we set up an organization, CFP Administration LLC, College Football Playoff, that is set up to manage and implement this whole operation.

The Board of Managers are representatives from each conference, president and chancellor serves as their ultimate governing body. And that's been our next level at the board, management committee which is made up of 10 FBS conference commissioners and the athletic director of the University of Notre Dame.

They are the ones that managed, that made that happen. We have a small staff of 12 that's set up. We set up our headquarters in Irving, Texas. That's where we're here to try to implement the wishes of our leadership.

We work very hard. We know it's a very different system as we go through how this new format will go. Totally different world, we think about playing two different games to get to the ultimate goal of winning the National Championship.

We take the counsel of not only our leadership but we've got an athletic director advisory group. We worked with a whole group of directors of football operations throughout the country.

We've been working with SIDs, ticket management. Talked with the Football Writers Association. We've worked with everything we possibly can to anticipate any issues, challenges we can have to put the best foot forward we can in this inaugural year.

We know it's not going to be perfect, but



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we can sure get awfully close. With the ability to have the new entity we've also been able to do the first time, some new things as relates to community outreach and involvement.

The College Football Playoff Foundation has been started and obviously a lot of great colleges to support, but it makes the most sense to support education and in particular our focus is on teachers.

As you might have saw, back on May 1st we launched what's called the Extra Yard for Teachers campaign. What that is, is a way to honor, empower, inspire teachers across this country and in particular the communities we serve.

We'll find ways to provide resources to different projects throughout the country, provide professional development opportunities for teachers across the country and look for ways to inspire a college culture amongst grade school students, letting them realize not only are we talking about student-athlete opportunities that might exist, but going to college in any way to try to further your goals to help your family is a worthy goal.

So we're excited about that. We'll also look to establish sustainability programs in addition to the National Championship program that we'll get off and running in this very first year. So we're awfully excited.

We will fund the Extra Yard for Teachers campaign primarily through our licensing revenues from all college football playoffs and merchandise. So you'll see, again, a program campaign this month that will really focus in on that. But anytime you see things that will take place in terms of our merchandise and our different games and championships, that's what it's going to. It's going to Extra Yard for Teachers who have gone the extra yard for us.

Obviously one of the things that is so key, so different beside the format itself is the way the Selection Committee has evolved. I know there will be questions about that, and we'll be here the next couple days to answer every one that we possibly can. But as you can see, it's on the screen above me, there are hundreds and hundreds of data points that we will be able to make available to our Selection Committee.

There's sprawl data, there's parity data, there's relative statistics. All these things that will be here for them to take advantage of.

Also the conferences have all worked together to help us get feedback from coaches,

from broadcast stations, anything they need at their disposal to make the best decision they possibly can, and they'll do it.

But their task and the focus is to rank the teams, rank the four best teams, and then it's to take -- to identify the top 25, and then also to place the team in the various Bowls, which in this case would be Cotton, Fiesta, and Peach Bowls as we go through the process.

Our management committee picked an all-star cast in terms of putting together this very first committee. It has people from all different focuses of what the task is. You've got an athletic directors, coaches, you've got former players, you've got university administrators, everyone taking a keen eye to make sure they can fulfill this mission of ranking, taking the best four teams and ranking the game to go along.

Jeff Long serves as our chairman for this inaugural year, and he's doing a fantastic job. We know that he will throughout the process.

Our emphasis, as I was getting to before, in terms of the stats and data and all the research that go into it, but, rest assured, once they go through that and get to their -- get through those processes, the things you see there emphasized have been drilled in from the management committee as the key points that need to come through. Really focusing on strength of schedule, on championships won, on the head-to-head competition, and on parity analysis of similar opponents. All those things are keenly important, and we'll say it over and over again.

Again, as you'll see on the collegefootballplayoff.com website, all of our protocols for the Selection Committee are all there.

Now, another new thing about it is the weekly rankings process. As a part of our transparency efforts, it was decided to go to weekly rankings beginning on the week of October 28. Now, realize October 28 is a Tuesday. But the college football ranking, once we get past about week nine of this year, will happen on a Tuesday night. It's a little different, we need to mark our calendars to get used to. That will carry us through all the way to the next Selection Sunday.

Our committee members felt it was important for fans, coaches, and players to know where they stand as they go through this. They could have waited until the last week, they could have kind of shocked the world with what happened, but they chose the right thing for the



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sport and the right thing to do to come up with these weekly rankings, and they will.

We know when we get the final rankings, we announced a couple of weeks ago, the way Selection Sunday will kind of unfold. That's new. That's different. Something to mark your calendars for.

By 12:45 Eastern Time, the Selection Committee will have picked the top four teams and which semifinal they're going to play in. That will be 12:45 Eastern Time, Chairman Long and Bill Hancock will walk out of the room and be able to announce those.

And the next hour or so after that, and in this particular case that's when -- in every case, that's when contract bowls will be able to make their various selections and determinations. The first year it turns out to be the Orange Bowl that will have that pick or have that process that they'll go through. They'll have a little time to complete that. They'll get information back to us. And then by 2:45 Eastern Time is when we anticipate and hope to be able to reflect and to go back to work and figure out who else will be placed in the Cotton, Fiesta, and Peach Bowls so we can get everything out to you.

So unlike BCS Selection Sundays of the past, the College Football Playoff Selection Sundays we think will bring a lot of conclusion by 3:00 Eastern. We think that's good for all of you in this room. Certainly our fans will be waiting for that information with bated breath.

The voting systems that you see and a lot of you know, follow and study from the college basketball committee and how they do things, the voting procedure itself in terms of the process is very similar. So they'll be able to focus on that and have a lot of deliberation on key points as they go get in three or four at a time in terms of trying to round out the top 25.

I think one key distinction I'll make about our Selection Committee and the basketball committees, is remember the Division I men's basketball committee not only selects a team but they also manage the event, and they've done a great job with it as a sporting event.

In our case, the Selection Committee will focus -- strictly focus on what I showed you earlier as the mission, and that is to pick the best four teams, to rank the top 25, and to place the bowls that still have slots available in terms of creating matchups. They don't have responsibility for the management of the event. That's what our

management committee does. That's what our staff does at their direction.

So, again, our Selection Committee focuses solely, 100 percent, on picking the best four teams and making it work.

A couple things to draw back the emphasis on our triple -- back-to-back triple header. As you look above, you can see who we have in the first year just getting ready for the key dates. We know on December 31st we're going to have the Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl, Fiesta Bowl, and the Orange Bowl are going to be a triple header. And that is going to lead into New Year's Day, we're going to have the Cotton Bowl to start off your day, leading to the Rose Bowl presented by Northwestern Mutual, and then off to the Allstate Sugar Bowl. Those last two being the very first College Football Playoff Semifinals at the Rose and Sugar Bowl.

Rotation (indiscernible) you have it. And in the year two, the Orange and the Cotton are both the semifinals and will go through different processes. And in year three, as you see, the Fiesta and the Peach will hold the semifinals.

Think back a few minutes ago when I talked about the significant change to New Year's Day and the New Year's spectacle and look in the second and third years of those rotations. The semifinals are held on New Year's Eve. So that's -- the neighborhood watch party has now become a College Football Playoff watch party, and we're excited about it.

We unveiled two weeks ago today a brand-new trophy that will be the pinnacle prize of college football. It is -- as you might recall, about a year and a half ago, hundreds of thousands of fans voted for what the College Football Playoff symbol would be, the golden football graphics that was emphasized what the playoff is all about.

We were able to take that, grow that and make it into our new iconic trophy. The trophy starts with a stainless steel football that fits into that base and grows up to the size of an actual college football, and then is bracketed with 24-carat gold pair of brackets to symbolize the playoffs that we're all here to enjoy.

Great piece of art. It's been well received, and it's going to be something that we can't wait to have someone hoist for the first time. Trophy does lift from the base, so it could be lifted in victory.

Our national championship sites. This year we're at AT&T in Arlington. That will be the

site for the very first College Football Playoff National Championship. You might remember in December we announced the next two Championship sites for '16 and '17 being Arizona and also in Tampa.

This time next year we'll be in the throes of what we think is a very competitive process for 2018, '19, and '20 National Championship sites. We've heard from over a dozen. We can't wait to get to work on the next process to figure out where we go with the next chapter of the College Football Playoff National Championship.

The next, essentially the last slide, is the bracket. Everyone's wanted a bracket for college football for quite some time. That's your bracket for this year. The Rose Bowl and Sugar Bowl serves as great hosts for the very first College Football Playoff semifinals, and I know we have representatives from both bowls here that I would encourage you to talk to them about the plans they have in store.

We get questions often about will there be a bowl experience when they go to the semifinals for the players and the coaches. The answer is, yes, there is. That's why we kept it the bowl tradition. That's why we kept it in the bowls.

And in this case the template that we'll use that's worked well for us, because we know there's a lot at stake in these games, because we're going to take the former template of the BCS National Championship game week and transfer that into the College Football Playoff semifinal week. And by that they'll be in town for six nights, but the first half of the event and activities in the community will be front loaded. They'll have a great time. They'll enjoy that.

And as it gets closer to game time, just as the national championships of the past, start zeroing in on the task at hand and winning the game.

From a media coverage standpoint, realize that we will have our Media Days, one on December 29th for one semifinal and one on December 30th. We do that by design. One will be No. 1 versus No. 4; the other one, No. 2 versus No. 3. Separate those out and you can maximize the coverage and get to where you need to get to do that.

Our national championship week, the teams will come into town on Friday. I told you before how the national championship game itself is on Monday. In this case it's January 12th. The team comes in Friday afternoon, late Friday afternoon. Media Day will be Saturday. And then



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we'll take it from there. Much shorter window in terms of what will happen from a team standpoint.

Realize that we'll also have a handful of press conferences that will all be centered in press headquarters at our North Texas arrangement. That will be the Renaissance Hotel in Dallas, home for media for the championship. We'll take interviews there. Our Media Day will be part of fan central that I talked about at Dallas Convention Center, which is only a few miles away. So the convenience has been thought of greatly as we put together the logistics for this first National Championship.

So that really brings us to the main high-level remarks about that in mind to share with you that you can see, as marked above, collegefootballplayoff.com is our website. We use it as a great source to get information out and really encourage you to use that.

I'll be around today and tomorrow at a roundtable session. We can answer any questions you have. We have some exercises that we can go through in terms of how the actual placement works in terms of placing different bowls and how the Selection Committee tackles different items. I'll encourage you to stop by. We'll play Selection Committee mock sessions tomorrow as time permits.

I believe our time has come to a close, but, again, I look forward to being with you. I really appreciate your attention and your focus on the College Football Playoff and really can't wait to be working with all of you in terms of making it something very, very special.

All of us in this room have an opportunity to truly create the next great iconic sporting event on American soil, and we look forward to the task at hand and can't wait to see the players and coaches go out in great big form.

Thank you for your time today, and I look forward to being with you.

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