

12-4-2006 Football Championships

1 (File: 20061204mwm DII 7 III fb championships)

2 JOSH CENTOR: Welcome to "Mondays With Myles". It's  
3 an exciting time of year as the football championship  
4 subdivision, Division II and Division III football tournaments  
5 are underway.

6 Dr. Brand, why should people tune in to these games?

7 DR. MYLES BRAND: They're going to be very exciting.  
8 I think this is an opportunity for these divisions to have a  
9 playoff in which the best teams confront each other. It  
10 produces larger interest amongst our student athletes, as well  
11 as particularly amongst the fans. It will be exciting for  
12 them.

13 JOSH CENTOR: And there are good games on television.  
14 We can tune in from home.

15 DR. MYLES BRAND: There are good games on television,  
16 some on broadband, as well. I think everyone will be able to  
17 root for their favorite teams, their home teams.

18 JOSH CENTOR: Obvious question. Let's talk a little  
19 bit about why there isn't a tournament for the top-tiered  
20 teams in Division I.

21 DR. MYLES BRAND: You know, that may be one of the  
22 questions that I'm asked the most, when I go out on the road  
23 and talk about schools and various other places. And as I've  
24 thought about it, it seems to me that the real underlying  
25 reason why we don't have a tournament in Division I, at the

1 Bowl level is because of the importance of the regular season.  
2 I think these schools in division -- what used to be called  
3 I-A really want to emphasize that regular season. You know, a  
4 good example would be the Michigan-Ohio State game. That was  
5 a traditional rivalry.

6 Those traditional rivalries in Division I-A are  
7 critically important to the schools, to the student body, to  
8 the alumni, as well as to the student athletes and their  
9 coaches. And they want to make sure they continue to  
10 emphasize that.

11 And if you turn Division I-A into a tournament sport,  
12 I think those very strong traditional rivalries that the fans  
13 have come to love and expect would be diminished. So what  
14 they really want to do is focus in on the regular season.

15 JOSH CENTOR: But is it fair? Take Boise State, for  
16 example, is it fair that Boise State, perfect through the  
17 regular season, won't have an opportunity to challenge for a  
18 national championship?

19 DR. MYLES BRAND: There are folks who want to see a  
20 national championship.

21 But Division I-A, the Bowl championship division, is  
22 just different. That's not what it is. It really has a  
23 history and tradition of the Bowls, which are third parties.  
24 We do have more Bowls now than we had in the past, so we can  
25 make an argument about whether there are too many or not. But

1 Boise State, for example, is going to have a great opportunity  
2 to play in a terrific Bowl. You're going to have a large fan  
3 base.

4 We can argue about whether they're the best team in  
5 the country at the end of the season or not. And part of the  
6 fun, frankly, for fans in sports is to sometimes argue about  
7 who is number one. And I think those arguments are fine.

8 JOSH CENTOR: Okay. Well, I see your point. I do  
9 have another question, though, about the end of the regular  
10 season, and getting to those BCS Bowl Games.

11 We've got a 50-day break in there. You don't see that  
12 in any other sport, 50 days between your final regular season  
13 contest and a postseason contest. Why do we need such a long  
14 break?

15 DR. MYLES BRAND: Well, it's a little longer because  
16 the Big 10 is involved. And the Big 10 has had a strong  
17 tradition over many years of finishing its regular season  
18 before the Thanksgiving break. Other schools and other  
19 conferences continue on. So it isn't quite 50 days, but it  
20 could be a month or longer.

21 And that's just because of the Christmas break, the  
22 Bowl season, it gives the coaches an opportunity to work with  
23 their student athletes. 30 days is rather traditional is  
24 long, 50 days because of who is involved is very long.

25 Is it too long? Perhaps. But I think you have to

1 also look at the point that they want to make sure that these  
2 games could be seen by a broad audience, and that means you  
3 have to have a special television window for it. And that  
4 pushes the date ahead.

5 JOSH CENTOR: For all of those at home who don't  
6 necessarily understand how it works, you or I couldn't just  
7 say, hey, we want to see a postseason playoff structure in  
8 what was Division I-A.

9 Tell us a little bit about how the NCAA works with the  
10 Bowl games and how it's all put together.

11 DR. MYLES BRAND: Well, the short answer and the quite  
12 simple answer is the NCAA has no role whatsoever to play in  
13 postseason Bowl championship games. We don't have anything to  
14 do with the Bowls. The Bowls negotiate with the conferences  
15 and they make prearrangements -- what number you finish in a  
16 certain conference is contracted with a Bowl to see which  
17 Bowls you go to now.

18 In the past, it was more of a bidding process, but now  
19 it's all pretty well contractually committed in advance,  
20 depending where you wind up in your conference and how the  
21 conferences negotiate these.

22 NCAA has no role whatsoever to play. I do like to  
23 watch the game, but that's about my only role in it. And  
24 that's fine. I mean, I think that group of schools, running  
25 their football programs as they do, in the traditional way

1 they have, works well. And I don't think the NCAA needs to be  
2 involved.

3 Now, we do have a different role. We've got to make  
4 sure the student athletes are eligible; we have to make sure  
5 that they're making academic progress towards their degree.  
6 That kind of regulatory work we continue to do.

7 But we don't have any role to play in the postseason  
8 or in the old Division I-A do we have any role to play in the  
9 regular season for football either.

10 JOSH CENTOR: And as we're talking about playoff  
11 football this time of year, I'd be remiss if I didn't ask you  
12 about some of the changes going on in the coaching world.  
13 There have been a lot of switches in the last few weeks. And  
14 I don't want to talk about any of them specifically.

15 But what should we look for with regard to hiring  
16 practices now in the next month or two?

17 DR. MYLES BRAND: Well, we're seeing a group of  
18 coaches now finding themselves in a market that also includes,  
19 in football, the NFL. And that has raised the payout for  
20 these -- the compensation for these coaches. Now, the amount  
21 the school puts in is still about the same -- not inexpensive,  
22 but only a small portion, less than 25 percent on average of  
23 what they're total compensation is.

24 The other parts of the compensation are going to come  
25 from apparel contracts, speaking engagements, summer camps,

1 and so on.

2 But we're going to probably see a continued rise in  
3 their compensation packages, because of that outside earned  
4 income.

5 The other thing we should be looking for, I hope, is  
6 searches that are open and fair. We have some great coaches on  
7 the sidelines who are ethnic minorities, who deserve a shot at  
8 it. I mean, if you're interested in a quality coach who is  
9 going to produce a winning team, universities should not  
10 overlook any possibilities.

11 And if you make your decisions too fast, and if you  
12 don't look at all the talent available, you run the risk of  
13 not getting the best coach. And unfortunately African  
14 American head football coaches have been on the outside  
15 looking in, despite the quality of their efforts.

16 JOSH CENTOR: All right. Well, we'll keep our eye on  
17 that. Thanks for chatting some football with me.

18 It's an exciting time of year. Make sure to tune in  
19 to all of the playoff games you're seeing on television. And  
20 we will see you next week.

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