

PAC-12 Men's Basketball Media Day

Tuesday, October 8 2019

Larry Scott

Pac-12 Commissioner



LARRY SCOTT: Good morning, everyone. Delighted to -- great, I don't usually get a response. I like it. Really delighted to welcome everyone to Pac-12 men's basketball media day. We've got our coaches here from all 12 schools. We've got two student-athletes from each of our schools, a lot of really exciting, interesting story lines. It's going to be a full day with you all from the media and our broadcast partners who are also here from ESPN, Fox and the Pac-12 networks. We've got a few announcements this morning. What I'd like to start with is a few remarks and overviews about the Pac-12 season ahead.

As a conference we feel excellent about the direction of our men's basketball program and where it's heading under great leadership of coaches and strong support from our athletics directors and our athletics departments. We've got great incoming recruiting classes that are joined with a strong roster of returners, several different Pac-12 teams are appearing in the national top 25 polls, and we've got four of the top 11 recruiting classes in the country, including having signed 10 of the top 50 recruits in the country, and we're welcoming this year five McDonald's 2019 All-Americans. So we've got a great pipeline of talented student-athletes coming into the conference this year.

We've also got three exciting new head coaches in the league. I'm delighted to welcome Mark Fox at Cal. Mick Cronin at UCLA and Kyle Smith at Washington State, all of whom bring a very impressive track record of success from their prior stops. But what I find really impressive is if you look at the 12 coaches as a group that we've got in the league, they represent collectively 3,000 career victories. On average, they've averaged close to 21 wins per season as a group, and they've combined for 61 NCAA Tournament appearances. With all 12 of our coaches having appeared in the NCAA Tournament.

Our goal as a conference is to have both elite teams at the top competing in Final Fours and for National Championships, as well as strong depth throughout the conference. And we want to continuously improve, which means having more teams qualify for the NCAA Tournament every year.

As I've said, I believe with the strength of our coaches,

returning and new student-athletes in our league, we've got an opportunity to have a very successful season this year. And I think it bears mentioning when you look at the talent in our league what this conference has produced in terms of players going to the NBA.

The Pac-12 has had the second most NBA draft picks amongst the autonomy five conferences over the last five years. And this is a great indicator for me of the level of talent that is coming through the league and the great job our coaches do in developing this talent and getting them ready for the next level, for those that are ready to go.

We've also been very busy as a conference working collaboratively with our athletics directors, our coaches on new initiatives that are going to strengthen our league in different ways.

Earlier this year, we announced a change to our scheduling: We're moving to a 20-game league schedule in 2021. And this is all in an effort to have a more competitive conference schedule, more high-quality conference games, higher ratings, more opportunities for great rivalry games, to elevate the national branding of the conference, and ultimately to have better résumés that get more teams into the NCAA Tournament.

Additionally, we've announced that we're going to be elevating the standards for non-conference scheduling, again, with similar objectives in mind. Stronger schedules, higher ratings, more opportunities on big stages, more opportunities for higher-profile wins, all of which is meant to raise the tide for all of our programs, get more teams into the NCAA Tournament.

And finally, we're looking at new events, bigger platforms, bigger stages, high-profile national exposure against elite non-conference competition. This is about stronger non-conference games that, again, will help elevate the conference as a whole.

I'll be coming back to that topic in a moment with a couple announcements on that front.

And importantly, television exposure for our programs, for our games, is of paramount importance. This year through our collective TV partners, there will be over

220 Pac-12 basketball games on television. This is through ESPN, Fox, CBS, ABC, and of course the Pac-12 Networks.

We have every game from the conference that's telecast. We've got every game from our Pac-12 tournament telecast. 43 of our games will be on ESPN or ABC, 23 games on FS1, three games on CBS, two on Fox, and at least 150 on the Pac-12 networks. And that's in addition to other appearances or programs we'll have when they play in tournaments or when they play non-conference competition outside of our footprint.

These broadcasts are going to show some incredible match-ups from the league that demonstrate also that our programs are not afraid to schedule against the toughest competition nationally. The Pac-12 non-conference home slate this year features 34 games against teams that participated in postseason play last year, including 16 games against teams that were in the 2019 NCAA Tournament field.

Some examples of home games we've got against Gonzaga, Houston, Iowa State, Kansas, Minnesota, St. Mary's and Temple, and our non-conference away schedule includes games against 26 teams that competed in postseason play last year. Examples: These games at Baylor, Kansas, Michigan and Nevada, just to name a few.

Yesterday I was pleased to be able to announce an extension of our arrangements in Las Vegas for the men's and women's Pac-12 basketball tournaments. We've added an additional two years so that the tournament will be played there through 2022. The men will continue at the T-Mobile Arena, where we've had a great few years under our belt and a great foundation to build upon, and the women at the Mandalay Bay Events Center. Last year was the first year we had the women's Pac-12 tournament in Las Vegas, the MGM Grand Garden Arena. We are delighted to extend our years there and moving to the Mandalay Bay where the Las Vegas Aces play.

And I'm really pleased that some of our partners from MGM and Las Vegas events are here with us today. I'll be introducing them in a moment and we'll talk a little bit about what we're doing there. These events have been hugely successful and popular with our student-athletes, our coaches and most importantly our fans who really enjoy going to Las Vegas and supporting the event in ways we haven't.

Over two of the top four most attended Pac-12 men's tournaments have taken place in the last three years at T-Mobile Arena. The quality of the games, the exposure of the staging has made this an event

befitting our programs and our end-of-season championship.

We announced tickets on sale for end-of-year championships, with the men's event taking place March 11 through 14. Hope all of you here today will be able to make it to witness it. It's an exciting time for our conference in Las Vegas, and with these tournaments we're now being joined by our Pac-12 football championship, which we earlier announced will be at the new Las Vegas stadium that the Raiders are participating in building there. Starting in 2020 we'll be moving our football championship there.

Before I introduce some of our guests and make another announcement, I want to say how much I'm looking forward to our special guest that will be here at the lunch hour, Bob Myers, who's the general manager of the Golden State Warriors will be joining us. Pac-12 product, former student-athlete and basketball player at UCLA, Bob has been a great partner. He and the Warriors, we work with them in terms of their development with the Chase Center, very much what they had in mind, was this being a great home for college hoops, and we're delighted that we're going to be co-hosting with the Warriors the Al Attles Classic event later in year, as well as the 2022 NCAA regionals, an endeavor that the conference has worked on closely with the Warriors and the Chase Center to help make a reality.

The Al Attles Classic is taking place on December 21st. It is produced by the Basketball Hall of Fame. It's a new one-day quadruple-header event with three Pac-12 teams in it, honoring Al Attles, who's a true legend in the game, a recent inductee to the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame, and I think you'll all be interested to hear what Bob has got to say about that event and for the future of college basketball here at the Chase Center in San Francisco.

Okay, onto an announcement we're really excited about. I mentioned a few minutes ago the Pac-12 in-season men's basketball event, along with the extension of our season-ending conference tournament in Las Vegas. We are going to build upon that with another exciting non-conference special event, and to help me talk about it, I want to invite up to the stage some important partners of ours, Tim Leiweke from the Oak View Group, George Kliavkoff from MGM Resorts and Pat Christenson from Las Vegas Events. Joining me up here is Ted Robinson, who's going to moderate this conversation.

Let me tell you what we're up here to discuss: Today the Pac-12 Conference in conjunction with the Oak View Group, Las Vegas Events, MGM with support from Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Association is

pleased to be announcing a challenge series, a Pac-12 challenge series starting in December 2020, which is going to feature three Pac-12 teams every year, facing off against three teams from a rival conference. The inaugural event will be held at T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas, where Washington in the first year will be playing against Oklahoma, Colorado will be playing against TCU, and Oregon will be playing against a to-be-determined Big 12 team. So this is a Pac-12-Big 12 match-up in year one.

The series will rotate amongst multiple cities. So the Pac-12-Big 12 match-up will also take place then in 2021 in Dallas. The series will then feature three other Pac-12 teams in 2021 in Las Vegas against a different conference, and the next year go to a neutral site in that rival conference to play against those.

This is a five-year arrangement. It's very innovative, unique. It's an interesting twist for our conference on this challenge concept. We're going to be able to rotate through different conferences across the country where the Pac-12 plays against different big-time conferences, toggling between the event in Las Vegas, which will take place every year, and then the return in another part of the country.

So really appreciate all the effort that's gone into putting this together. Las Vegas has truly become an exciting home for the Pac-12, for our basketball championship, our football championship, and now this special challenge event, as well as leveraging Oak View Group's resources, we're going to be able to play in some of the other great arenas around the country, playing against other top-notch conferences.

Thank you, gentlemen. Ted, appreciate you being here, and lead us through the discussion.

TED ROBINSON: Good morning, everybody. Larry, as I'm listening to you talk and we're looking up at the 12 institutions that are represented up on the board, every institution -- on commencement day they give out honorary degrees, right? I feel like there's an honorary membership in store for Vegas, isn't there? This has become such an integral part of Pac-12 sports and of all college sports. So George, this thing started some years back when the Pac-12 was the first of the major conferences to say we're going to take our basketball tournament and move it to Vegas. Could you have dreamt it would have been this kind of a run?

GEORGE KLIAVKOFF: We've had a terrific run with the Pac-12. We were pleased earlier this year to announce moving the football championships to Vegas and partnerships with the Raiders and LVCVA and UNLV. We look forward to doing much more with the Pac-12. Vegas is really becoming the sports capital of

the world, and we're leading in our partnership.

TED ROBINSON: How much more do you think?

GEORGE KLIAVKOFF: I think there's a lot more to come. I think we have professional football, professional basketball with the Aces. We have obviously hockey with the Golden Knight, we have the Aviators in baseball, we're doing a lot with college. One of the interesting things that's happening in Vegas is the new NCAA rules opened up the opportunity to bid for the first time on NCAA championships, and the city intends to bid and win a lot of championships and bring more NCAA events to the city.

TED ROBINSON: And Pat, that leads into you because that's something the weekend before the NCAA Tournament begins is of course when everybody with the Pac-12 is there. I've heard legendary stories about what it's like in Las Vegas the first weekend of the tournament. It's an incredible magnet for college basketball fans.

PAT CHRISTENSON: It really is, and we will not be bidding on any first-round basketball championships because it already is there. We will be bidding on the regional.

But I look back on when we first approached the Pac-12 about our partnership, and to me it was a natural. I wasn't really that concerned about it because there were two great brands: One, the Pac-12 brand and Las Vegas. And what we had heard continuously was the most important thing to the Pac-12 was the experience for the athletes and the experience for the fans. And again, you look at the evolution of this MGM Grand Garden, which was kind of more of an intimate, but sold-out there, graduated to the T-Mobile, but from both a fan perspective and an athlete perspective, the convenience of T-Mobile and the properties around it pretty much epitomizes what Vegas can do for championship events, and I think that's why we're excited about the NCAA opportunity.

And the things that we've done with the Pac-12, our alliance with the Las Vegas Bowl as well as the Pac-12 basketball championships I think are just a precursor to things to tomorrow.

TED ROBINSON: And as the announcement Larry just made, it isn't just postseason basketball, now it's regular season basketball, and Tim, that leads into this challenge and the attempt -- it sounds very much like a well-intentioned effort to get higher-level competition in the regular season, that college basketball isn't just about March.

TIM LEIWEKE: I want to hear some of the legendary

stories from the first weekend. We passed right over that.

So I've had the good fortune of knowing Larry and being part of the Pac-12 family for a long time. I think these brands, these teams and their program are continuing to emerge as powerhouses within college basketball. So the ability to go find world-class arenas, and we have 28 of them in our alliance, we've known George and the MGM folks forever. We were part of helping create division when T-Mobile was created and we worked with Pat forever.

I actually was running AG at the time when Larry said, maybe we need to move this tournament to Vegas, and it was one of the few times where in losing an event we said, it's absolutely the right thing to do.

I think this takes an early-season concept, takes world-class markets that the fans and the athletes want to travel to and experience, takes world-class arenas that want to partner with MGM and Pac-12, and it gives the ability of the Pac-12 brand's world-class competition with some of the other conferences. All 28 of our arenas wanted to participate in this. There's not enough teams, unless Larry expands to the Pac-40, we've got to be patient as to how we roll this out. But I think partnership on point of destination, Las Vegas, and then adding buildings like the American Airlines in Dallas and expanding eventually to New York, where we may or may not have an arena up and operating by the time Larry needs an arena in New York. I think those are exciting places for the fans to travel to, exciting places for the players to experience, and a great partnership to expand the brand and the competition level for the Pac-12 and the various conferences that they'll play against.

TED ROBINSON: So Larry, what Tim just talked about, is part of this move here to have better regular season scheduling, the 20-game conference schedule being part of that?

LARRY SCOTT: Yes, it is. I think we've added a three-pronged approach to improving our schedule and putting our programs in the best position possible to get in the NCAA Tournament. So it's included the 20-game schedule, so more intra-conference play. The second is raising our standards for out-of-conference play to kind of keep the overall rating of our programs up, and the third is working with partners to create high-profile, big-stage opportunities against some of the biggest brands and the most successful programs around the country that are playing postseason, where we have a chance to go head to head on big stages in front of big national audiences to showcase what we do.

So today's announcement is really the culmination of a lot of work that our team and Jamie Zaninovich from my staff has done with our athletics directors, with our coaches, to try to develop a strategy to really elevate Pac-12 and work closely with our programs to do so.

This is exciting. No other conference has really done something like this. That makes it a creative approach. It'll stay fresh. Every year we are playing against a new conference. Different teams cycling through. Las Vegas is our anchor, but we'll be playing in some of the other world-class venues around the country, giving us that geographic exposure, and I think it's just a great solution for the Pac-12.

TED ROBINSON: George, how many other conferences now call you on a fairly regular basis saying, can you fit us in?

GEORGE KLIAVKOFF: We've heard from a lot of them. We look forward to getting some of the conferences from the East Coast and the center of the country coming to play in this coast-to-coast challenge. I think one of the unique things about is Las Vegas is a great destination in the middle of the winter for someone to come from a colder destination. We think we're going to see a lot of fans coming to support their teams against the Pac-12. Certainly direct flights from every Pac-12 city, so we love that.

And then the other thing is Vegas has 42 to 43 million visitors every year. So every week we have 800,000 people that we can convert into Pac-12 basketball fans. We look forward to that.

TED ROBINSON: Regular season, do you expect to see that continue to grow?

GEORGE KLIAVKOFF: Absolutely.

TED ROBINSON: So Pat, you're a hockey town now, right?

PAT CHRISTENSON: Yes, we are.

TED ROBINSON: Arizona State plays hockey.

PAT CHRISTENSON: Right.

TED ROBINSON: Tim is involved in this small hockey venture in Seattle. What do you think, Pac-12 hockey championships 2028, let's say in Vegas. Larry, what do you think?

LARRY SCOTT: Arizona State has led the way and had amazing success so far. So never say never. But hockey is growing big time on the West Coast, isn't it?

PAT CHRISTENSON: Bring it on.

TED ROBINSON: Pat, how many people have asked you this week where you're going to build your baseball stadium?

PAT CHRISTENSON: Unfortunately, I'm not in that world, but I think we're just really proud of the fact that we have hockey and -- we have the NHL and the NFL now in Las Vegas. We've come a long way.

You know, the next step, who knows.

TED ROBINSON: So Tim, with your expertise in venues and when you see what T-Mobile Arena is and now you see the football stadium that's almost finished, I haven't seen it since the spring but almost finished, give us your view from your experience of the venues that this is going to take place in Vegas.

TIM LEIWEKE: Well, Vegas is unbelievably unique in that you have those 43 million people. So if you're thinking of this particular tournament that we're creating here in mid to right before the holidays in December, and you start thinking about folks from Seattle or Denver or other parts of the country that get to go traveling to Vegas, probably not a hard thing for us to convince them. What a great way to go spend a weekend and participate. But if you also take into consideration T-Mobile's world-class -- what did you say, it was the highest grossing arena?

GEORGE KLIAVKOFF: Last year it was the highest grossing arena in the world.

TIM LEIWEKE: So that's a pretty strong compliment to a brand new arena.

I think the Raiders stadium is going to act more like an event center than it is a stadium, so I think you're going to see 100 events there every year.

Vegas is unique. You have those hotel rooms, you have the nightlife, you have all the different things that attract people, but you also have that transportation hub and the flights that connect everyone in the country to that particular location. I think we kind of look at it, and Dan Shell in our group, where we're building arenas in various college markets, for example, University of Texas in Austin. We also wanted to be in the content business, and uniquely the first place we wanted to be in the content business was with Pac-12 and Vegas. We've seen how well the tournaments have gone. I think an early-season opportunity like this, especially in mid-December, in an arena like T-Mobile, will do extremely well.

So we're proud to be a part of it, and we couldn't be

more excited because I think Vegas has some of the greatest venues in all of the country. I wish I owned one of them.

TED ROBINSON: When you say "content," you mean events?

TIM LEIWEKE: Events, right.

TED ROBINSON: Could you see a day when there's a major college event every weekend during the college season in Las Vegas?

TIM LEIWEKE: Kind of hard to compete with all the other stuff going on in Vegas. We really like this idea. I think the timing is perfect. I don't think there's an oversaturation. I think, by the way, Pac-12 is the perfect conference to do this with because of their influence on the western part of the United States. I wouldn't want to be doing this every weekend, but at the end of the day, I think this is a really good first step to expanding it.

And look, let us add, there are other markets that really want this, so one of the hard parts that Dan and our organization had to do with Larry and his team is we had far more requests for arenas that wanted to participate in this, and Larry has a very patient view of, let's do it right, let's roll it out, and then eventually expand it.

So as much as I think Vegas is the perfect anchor, what you're going to see is some of our other world-class venues now want to jump in and participate in this because there's such a demand for these games.

TED ROBINSON: George smiled, by the way, when I asked you that question.

GEORGE KLIAVKOFF: We're fortunate. MGM resorts has three arenas and Pac-12 has played at all of them - Mandalay Bay Event Center, Grand Garden Arena and T-Mobile Arena, and as the commissioner knows, we have 12 hotels at every price point. So it creates this great opportunity for people who want to come and see their teams play to choose the package that they want to be able to do that.

TED ROBINSON: So Larry, maybe a good way to wrap this up in a bow, the history of this conference basketball tournament was a little bit uneven, including an absence for a while. Various scenarios didn't quite fly the way you'd like. Could you have dreamt this when you made this decision come years back that this would be the start of what we're now talking about today in Las Vegas?

LARRY SCOTT: No, I don't think anyone could have envisioned the growth and the trajectory. I mean, we

had gotten a lot of feedback from our fans, and after I started with Staples Center, I remember having long conversations with Tim, and we were ready for a change. Our fans were ready for a change. And we had some experience playing football in Las Vegas, but not basketball. So it was a leap of faith.

But we had great partners. Our fans had expressed an interest. But right from the first year, we saw that it resonated, fans were turning up, and then the buzz and the excitement, the word of mouth that built on it, it was a bit like a hockey stick in terms of the growth and the excitement.

The other thing we could not have anticipated was T-Mobile Arena. We only envisioned Grand Garden, and when T-Mobile came up, I remember we had long discussions about that, and do we want to move from the intimate, sold-out, but we again took another leap of faith and now we're selling out T-Mobile Arena. It's been a great success and times have changed and it's opened up and now we're going to be able to add more events.

I think it's really -- to me it's a great reinforcer of the importance of great partnerships, listening to your fans, what they want, great collaboration with our universities, our coaches, and being prepared to take some risks. Without any guarantee that it's going to work out, but this happens to be a great example of where it worked out, and of course at that time who could have envisioned pro football coming to Las Vegas, as well.

I think we went with our gut, tried to respond to our fans, and put ourselves in a position where we're an early mover, first mover, have wound up with great partners, and now we're at the forefront of creating very special events for our programs, our student-athletes and our fans.

TED ROBINSON: I think that's a wonderful take on these new announcements and this continued basketball future in Las Vegas for the conference.

Q. I know the Pac-12 stance on the California bill on the paying the players for endorsements and the like, but I'm wondering if it's going to be in play in California, would you prefer it either to be in play for the entire conference to have a level playing field so that everybody is under the same kind of situation? There's no benefits for recruiting for UCLA, USC and the Bay Area schools.

LARRY SCOTT: Yeah, certainly want the focus today to be on basketball but happy to answer your questions on that narrow point about the California law. One of the concerns that we've expressed is we think it's very

difficult to continue a national sport, national sports in a national system with state-by-state rules. Certainly would create complications within our own conference, with four out of our 12 schools being in California. But nationally, as well. College sports is a national system. It's national in terms of recruiting. It's national in terms of eligibility and competing for National Championships.

What's become pretty clear since last Monday when the governor signed the bill is that there's other states that are likely going to follow suit. I think last I counted, 12 that have had state senators or assembly people raise their hand and say, we want to do something similar.

To me that's not ideal, and we are going to be very active working with our schools. There's a lot more discussion to be had to kind of understand what the potential implications are, working with peers and other conferences, working through the NCAA to try to develop a national response and solution, because we don't think a state-by-state approach with different rules and regulations is workable.

Q. May I ask you to clarify one thing you said on this topic yesterday that I wasn't sure I understood: In terms of how this could affect women's sports or sports programs, were you saying that if donors contributed more money toward recruiting, that those funds would come out of athletic departments toward recruiting kids to go to California schools, or how do you see it hurting women's sports specifically?

LARRY SCOTT: Yeah, well, we've got a few concerns from a women's sports and women's opportunity perspective. The first -- I think you did a good job of describing the concern. I think it's a zero-sum game. We don't think that there are new resources that are necessarily going to be available for compensating student-athletes for NIL. The point that I was trying to make is I think anyone that works in college sports understands this very aggressive, competitive situation for recruiting, recruiting student-athletes.

And I think the concern, and I think loopholes in this bill and one of its several flaws is that it doesn't contemplate that there's competitive recruiting between schools, and that money, if it's allowed, will be used to attract student-athletes to go to school X over school Y, and it'll be dressed up as an NIL payment for an appearance, an autograph. All of that.

It'll come from money that's already going to our campuses in my view. It'll come from donors or local companies that want to support their local program. So there will be less resources, I believe, that our

campuses will have, and they'll have to make some adjustments, and from conversations I've had, I think there is a good likelihood that'll come out of the hide of other programs. So men's Olympic sports programs and women's programs.

Secondly -- and that's the primary concern. Less resources our schools have will reduce opportunities.

What I also know from my long history in women's sports, having run the leading global sport for women, women's tennis for six years, on the executive committee of the Women's Sports Foundation, worked with Billie Jean King and other leaders, Title IX has been a great equalizer and great supporter of opportunities for women.

These NIL payments, as they are imagined, if they go to recruiting, are not going to be governed by Title IX and the free market, and for those that follow women's sports and gender equity, they realize that women don't come anywhere close to getting the same opportunities that men have in our country. We're reading about the concerns of the women's World Cup team, women's ice hockey. Forbes produced their annual survey of the top-100 paid athletes in the world. There's 99 men and Serena Williams.

So this world of NIL payments, while we certainly have a few high-profile women's student-athletes that might benefit, there's no doubt in my mind from everything I know in my experience that 99 percent plus or minus will go to men, not to women, and whatever resources are spent this way will be taken from athletics departments, which runs a significant risk of taking away opportunities for women, as well as men in the Olympic movement.

Q. I was curious if there's been any discussion of maybe hoping the NBA will eliminate the one-and-done rule and allow high-schoolers to go straight to the NBA and if that might make things simpler for you guys with this issue?

LARRY SCOTT: I think it could, and it's one of the reasons we've been big supporters of the pro leagues loosening their restrictions, because we are sympathetic and sensitive to some of the arguments from the .5 percent to 1 percent of student-athletes that have a real name image and likeness value or have promising pro careers ahead of them. We want those young people to have those opportunities, and we would like the pro leagues to loosen their restrictions. Baseball is a great example. Major League Baseball has a very clear fork in the road for high school baseball players. If you want to be a professional, if you want to earn money from your name, image and likeness, if you want to get a salary, you can go to Major League Baseball right out of high school. You do

not have to go to college. You do not have to be a student-athlete. Pursue those dreams. It's excellent.

However, if you do choose to go to college, you're there for three years and you're a legitimate student and you're going to your classes, and you're getting grades and you're staying eligible and you're participating as an amateur student-athlete, then you can go back into the draft after three years. We think that's the best system out there, pro sports.

The NBA unfortunately and the NBA Players' Association has restricted up until now the ability of basketball student-athletes to go straight from high school -- they are forced to either go to college for a year or go increasingly play outside the United States. So we very much encourage the idea that high schoolers that have no interest in being amateur student-athletes and getting an education shouldn't have to go to school, and I do think it will clarify the difference between pro sports and the collegiate sports model.

Q. Do you have any more clarity on how you might add those extra two games and whether you might keep the current rotation, picking out a couple games that aren't being played or whether you might blow up that whole model and start again?

LARRY SCOTT: So we haven't decided yet. I was this morning with our staff, with our 12 coaches in a coaches' meeting, and we were in the process of trying to figure that out. We're looking at different models, and we hope to have a decision later this fall or winter that we'll announce. Our objective is to set schedules long into the future that clarify, so our schools can do their non-conference scheduling and all that. But we're still looking at a few different models.

Q. I know it's real early in its infancy, but how far down the road are you in dealing with the NIL stuff? Have you started having conversations with the national people? And the obvious question is most of the endorsements that you would think that would be coming are coming from the shoe companies, and you've got two schools right now in the conference in the cross hairs of the NCAA mostly from troubles coming from the shoe companies. Have you had any conversations with the shoe companies not only about those allegations about what this could mean down the road?

LARRY SCOTT: So it is early days. I think I've spoken to all of our campuses just in the last week since the bill was signed, or am in the process of doing so, and I think people are still trying to understand it, digest it, think about the implications, and obviously we're watching what's happening around the rest of the

country as other state legislators talk about their intentions, either to copycat the California bill or to add on to it. I think in New York they've talked about they like California's approach to NIL but they want to add a 15% revenue share - all athletics department revenue should go to student-athletes and -- so it's that dynamic, fluid process at the moment.

We are coming together as a league later this month with our athletics directors and other campus administrators and student-athletes. That's the first time we'll have a chance to discuss it as a group. Then I meet with our presidents and chancellors in November and we'll have a chance there.

In parallel, the NCAA has formed an NIL working group and committee, which they formed when they kind of saw where this was heading. Pac-12 has got a representative on that group, Rick George, the athletics director at Colorado. They've spent a lot of time on this looking at it. So we plan to be very engaged. The Pac-12 has been I think a real thought leader and progressive in terms of advocating for benefits for student-athletes, whether it's the move to the full cost of attendance, increased health coverage, loosening of restrictions on food and nutrition and protecting student-athletes with time demands, and I think we'll be a leader in this discussion nationally, but it's going to take us some time for our campuses to try to evaluate what the implications of this are and to think about what our approach is.

I know we're going to advocate in some way, shape or form for a national approach as opposed to state by state, whether that's through the NCAA or otherwise. I know there are some U.S. Congress people that have already talked about maybe the U.S. Congress needs to get involved and look at this, and I don't know what the answer is likely to be, but I do know that we will be proactive and try to be advocating nationally for some type of national approach to this.

Q. And the shoe companies?

LARRY SCOTT: Shoe companies, sorry. Well, the California law does have a proviso in it that says student-athletes would not be able to sign endorsement deals in any categories that conflict with a campus arrangement. There was a carve-out where I think everyone is still trying to understand what that means.

My only comment, I have not discussed it since the governor signed the bill with the shoe companies, but I think the concerns we've seen through the FBI investigation and all that have really resonated with myself, with the other leaders in our conference, and it's the reason we're concerned about this bill. It's been pretty clear from the cases that the accusations are

about payments to move players from one school to another. It's not about the endorsement value, and I guess that's the flaw or one of the flaws that we've identified in this bill. It's talking about the opportunity for student-athletes to get their fair market value, their endorsement value, but we're concerned like we've seen with the FBI investigation, the shoe companies, that that will really -- what it will really be about is about the movement of players and paying players -- pay for play, paying players to go to a particular school, and if you to the school, you get X, Y or Z deal, all of which would be facilitated by agents, which the California bill allows. It allows agents to be on the campuses working with student-athletes from their freshman year negotiating these deals.

I do think we've seen the ghost of Christmas future with this FBI deal and this California bill, if adopted, would only exacerbate what everyone doesn't like with what shoe companies have done with college sports.

Q. I know that fans the last two years, UCLA has only played Arizona once during the regular season and fans would prefer that marquee match-up be played twice. Going to a 20-game schedule, will that allow you to maybe look at preserving some of these marquee match-ups on a yearly basis?

LARRY SCOTT: Yeah, so that's one of the motivations is to have less misses between conference schools with a 20-game schedule as opposed to an 18-game schedule. And we're trying to figure out -- there still will be a couple of misses. Until we get to a 22-game schedule, it's not a pure round-robin. We're not playing every school twice every year. So there will be misses. What we're trying to figure out is the system for spreading those misses, whether it's going to be kind of subjective year by year or whether it's formulaic in a schedule, whether that would have been -- whether misses would happen back to back home and away. This is exactly the type of issue we were discussing this morning with the coaches getting their feedback, and we'll be making a decision on it in the next couple of months.