

**July 14, 2016**



An Interview With:

## **LARRY SCOTT**

LARRY SCOTT: Welcome, and thank you all for joining us here in Hollywood for the 2016 Pac-12 football media days. Football generally signals the beginning of a new academic and collegiate sports year, and even though it doesn't quite feel like fall yet, I understand it'll be hot out there today, we're here to talk about football. So to me, today marks the beginning of a new year. And for those of us at the Pac-12, the beginning of our second century.

So I'd like to take this moment to briefly look back at our centennial year, and oh, what a year it was. The Pac-12 won 10 NCAA titles. No other conference won more than five.

The addition of those 10 NCAA titles brings our total national title count to 488, further widening the competitive gap between the Pac-12 and our peers. No other conference has won more than 277 titles.

We also sent a record 10 football teams to bowl games, a record seven men's basketball teams to the NCAA Tournament, and of course had two teams in the women's Final Four.

Stanford won its 22nd straight - that's right, 22nd straight Directors' Cup, and seven Pac-12 schools finished in the top 25 of the final standings. For those of you that saw the ESPYs last night, we swept the Capital One Cup, as the Stanford men and USC women were honored as the best overall athletic department programs in the country.

Over this past year, we also hosted the first ever regular season U.S. basketball game in China, added student-athletes to our official governing structure, and celebrated our 100th anniversary as a conference. It was a memorable year, certainly one of the best in our history, and I've got no doubt that 2016-17 will be even better, starting with what I expect to be another impressive Olympic showing for the Pac-12 in Rio in a little less than a month.

In London in 2012, if the Pac-12 had been a country, we would have come in fifth in the medal count, just ahead of Germany and Japan.

207 current or former Pac-12 student-athletes, coaches and delegates are already confirmed to participate in Rio, playing 18 different sports and representing 29 countries. This is why the Pac-12 is the Conference of Champions.

Now, I know we're all here to talk about the upcoming football season, and I'll get to that. But as commissioner, I wanted to outline the year ahead and some of the things the Pac-12 is doing to help our member schools and serve the Conference's 7,000 student-athletes.

There are many things that make the Pac-12 unique, from our unparalleled athletic success to our global vision and our wholly-owned media company, and rightfully, we have earned the reputation for doing things a little bit differently as we strive to redefine what a collegiate conference can do for its members and for its student-athletes.

Here in the Pac-12, we view our student-athletes in the fullest 360-degree sense. As impressive as they are on the field and courts, we celebrate the complete people that they are and recognize the full lives they lead during and after college.

This past year, we added student-athletes to our official governing structure and met with them on each of their campuses to understand the complexities and challenges of being a high-level Division I student-athlete in 2016 and all that that entails.

We're listening to and engaging our student-athletes more than anyone else, and because of that, we've been staunchly focused on the reforms that would ensure student-athletes can be successful on the field and courts and off, and our latest effort centers around rebalancing the time demands student-athletes spend on academics as well as athletics.

Based in part on the discussions that we've had on our campuses this past spring, we're



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working to implement new measures that make the time spent playing sports as beneficial and enriching as possible.

At its very core, college athletics is meant to create tremendous opportunity for our student-athletes at our great universities, but our student-athletes need adequate time to take full advantage of these opportunities, and we intend to continue to work with our peer conferences leading up to the January NCAA convention, the autonomy session there, to pass meaningful reform about time balance for student-athletes.

Another important student-athlete focus for us has been around student-athlete health and well-being. We're now in the second year of a grant program we created that funds important medical research to benefit all of our student-athletes. In this funding cycle, our board, which is made up of doctors from our universities, athletic trainers and researchers from around the Conference, selected seven cutting edge research projects to be conducted on Pac-12 campuses. We outlined this in a release we sent out this week where we'll be dedicating \$3.9 million this year in grants alone to examine head trauma, overuse injury, cardiovascular screening, thermal and hydration issues, as well as mental health.

I'm proud of what the Pac-12 is doing in this area. And with Pac-12 Networks, we're taking a holistic view of the media industry, which is going through a dramatic transformation. Entering its fifth year, the Pac-12 Networks has grown into a multifaceted media organization that's doing more for its Pac-12 members than ever before.

With our unique university-owned model, we're able to promote the full breadth of our universities and provide even more long-term value. At Pac-12 Network's core is the production of 850 high-quality live events per year, including 35 football games and a wide array of Olympic sports, and it's only growing stronger.

We recently announced, in fact today we're announcing more distribution here in Southern California through Frontier, formerly Verizon FIOS, with nearly 5,000 new subscribers just in Southern California, and the vast majority of our largest distribution partners, including Comcast and Cox, as of today, have designated our national network, the Pac-12 Network, as the primary network across the West. And this is good news for fans who, no matter where they live, can watch their favorite football team play this season, get all

football teams and the majority of Pac-12 basketball games.

Pac-12 Networks is also seeing growth in new distribution and engagement platforms in this rapidly changing media industry. We've always sought to be at the leading edge of our fast-changing industry and are happy to announce three initiatives today designed to provide fans deeper and better access to Pac-12 and university-produced content across Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube.

As Pac-12 Networks enters its fifth year, these three initiatives will deliver more quality video to more fans than ever before and deliver it in a way that's increasingly convenient for them. With Twitter, in an announcement we made just a few hours ago, we will become the first college media company to use their streaming platform, as we connect more fans with our university-produced content of Olympic sports, a minimum of 150 Olympic sports events will be live streamed via Twitter for the first time this year.

And with Facebook Live, we're going to be providing, this football season, fans with unique, behind-the-scenes access and exciting game-day content around the Pac-12 Networks' 35 football games.

And with YouTube, we, for the first time, have combined all 12 Conference schools' YouTube feeds into one channel to give fans easier and better access to content from across the Conference.

These partnerships point toward a future where content produced by Pac-12 Networks and our universities is more valuable than ever, will reach more fans than ever, through these innovative platforms, delivering more than just convenient viewing but also richer, more connected experience for our current fans and our future fans.

Take these remarks this morning, for example. Our team is broadcasting these live on Periscope and Facebook Live, allowing fans to weigh in with their thoughts and commentary in real time.

Now, outside of the content distribution, Pac-12 Networks, as a media organization, is also focusing on innovation and growth in its offering for our universities. Through our team at the Pac-12 Networks, we're collaborating with our schools on formal programs to engage and attract fans. The goal is for our universities to have better control

and oversight of their brands in the long run to build a stronger foundation on which to grow, as both college athletics and fan demands change.

A final new and exciting venture for the Pac-12 Networks this upcoming season is E-Sports, which grew out of increasing interest from our students and faculties on our campuses. This makes so much sense for the Pac-12 given where we are, and as we prep for competitions to start later this fall, we expect Pac-12 E-Sports to be a very successful program for our universities.

Our 360-degree mindset also pushes us to think outside of our traditional geographic boundaries. This year, the Pac-12 made history by hosting the first-ever U.S. regular-season basketball game, collegiate or professional, in China. The experience proved to be more than just a game. It was a seminal educational opportunity for the student-athletes that participated and a great platform for our universities to further engage and deepen their ties in China.

We're going to do it again for the second year in China this November, when Stanford and Harvard open the men's basketball season with a regular-season game there in the second annual Pac-12 China game.

Our effort around the globe is broader than just basketball in China. Our volleyball all-stars just returned from a trip to China, and our men's all-star basketball team just played two games against the Australian national team in Melbourne.

This fall, University of Utah and Arizona State University will host and train 200 Chinese coaches as part of an educational program with the Chinese Ministry of Education. These initiatives continue to grow and are very exciting for our universities and for our student-athletes.

With Pac-12 global, the conference and its membership are using sports to push beyond the traditional horizons, and we look forward to continued growth and success.

In fact, Cal is going to kick off this upcoming football season with first football game of the season in Sydney, Australia, this year, against University of Hawai'i, which brings us to the topic I know all of us are here to discuss today, which is Pac-12 football.

Standing here today, looking at the incredible depth from top to bottom in our Conference, I am confident no other conference has as many good teams as the Pac-12 this season, and with 10 of our 12 teams coming off bowl appearances, a record for us, and the return

of many student-athletes from last year, I expect this is going to be as exciting and deep a season as the Pac-12 has had.

Just consider last season, 10 of our teams averaged 30 or more points per game, an exciting brand of Pac-12 football, and five of our teams were ranked in the top 10 at some point last season.

Stanford, who ended the season in the top 3 of the 2015 standings, returns Heisman finalists, and is sure to produce another thrilling season. I see, for the first time, you, the media, have voted them the No. 1 preseason team going in. Hard to imagine that's the first time in the history of the Pac-12 Stanford has gotten that respect from the media.

Across the Conference, we return more than a dozen first-team All-Pac-12 selections and eight second-teamers, and our teams are loaded again at the skill positions. Our depth and excellence will be tested throughout the season with the toughest schedule in the nation.

Right from the start, our teams face a hyper competitive, non-conference slate that includes the defending national champions, when USC plays against Alabama in Dallas, and 18 non-conference opponents that participated in bowl games last season.

On top of that, our champion will of course have to survive a nine-game Conference schedule and a championship game, all the things that go into me confidently saying the Pac-12 has got the toughest road of any Conference in the country.

And for the third year in a row, our student-athletes get to end the season at Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara, home of Super Bowl 50. What a great experience for our student-athletes to play the Pac-12 Championship Game this year.

And I expect there to be a battle of teams that have been truly tested throughout the regular season, and they expect to compete on the sport's biggest stage.

The exciting Pac-12 football journey begins today. I hope you all enjoy the opportunity to talk to our coaches and student-athletes here in Hollywood. I thank you again for being here. Be happy to take your questions this morning.

Q. Larry, given the depth of the Conference that you spoke about, the annual question is do you worry about one team being able to emerge as a playoff contestant?

LARRY SCOTT: Well, with only a four-

team playoff, of course you worry about teams beating each other up, but the philosophy in our Conference and amongst our schools has always been to schedule tough, take on all-comers, and if a team deserves to be in the playoff, they will be.

The other thing that one notices is with the advent of the College Football Playoff, we know that in any given year, there will be teams with similar records, and a determining factor that the College Football Playoff selection committee will make is based on strength of schedule. So our Conference very much prides itself for a variety of reasons on playing the toughest schedule.

I mentioned USC versus Alabama. We, of course, have UCLA playing at Texas A&M to start. Every year we've got USC and Stanford playing Notre Dame, match-ups against Michigan and other top teams this year. The philosophy of our Conference for a variety of reasons is to play the best, strongest schedule they reasonably can, non-conference, strongest conference schedule, nine games, championship game, and that if we've got comparable records with teams from other conferences, our teams will get the benefit of the doubt.

Q. Larry, any developments with DirecTV and those negotiations?

LARRY SCOTT: Yeah, our team is regularly reaching out to DirecTV trying to engage them, convince them to carry the Pac-12 Networks. No news on that this morning, and we continue to be disappointed and frustrated that our fans have gone for four seasons, and those that are with DirecTV have been deprived of all the content that's on it.

So while our team will continue to knock on the door and push and offer them the same opportunity that over 75 different distributors have said yes to, we are also focusing our efforts with our current partners in trying to get more better distribution, as evidenced by the Comcast and Cox announcements this morning. So we continue to improve distribution with our current partners.

We continue to add new distributors. The addition of the former Verizon FIOS subs here in Southern California, now with Frontier, is a major add for our Southern California fans, and in this rapidly-changing media landscape, we are going to continue to be focused on new emerging ways to distribute our content, for example, with Twitter and Facebook that we announced today. We will keep knocking on that door and pushing as hard as we can, but also concentrating on the 75 distributors

that we have and new forms of distribution, as well, and we're hopeful that DirecTV eventually picks it up.

Q. Larry, you mentioned the news about Comcast and Cox. Can you just elaborate what that means exactly for subscribers to those two cable networks?

LARRY SCOTT: Sure. So going into -- this is a process that started last year in the fourth year of the Pac-12 Networks, and in the fifth year of the Pac-12 Networks, now that we have 850 live events, it's across seven different networks. 850 live events is too many for one network from a scheduling standpoint. We have multiple networks.

In many of our markets, Comcast, Cox, Time-Warner had the regional network be the network that was on their expanded platform, which meant this past year that there were certain football games, basketball games, there was a lot of discussion around the Pac-12 men's basketball tournament in Las Vegas, that some of the games that were not local teams weren't available in markets like Arizona or Southern California through the regional network. Fans can only get them on the national network, which was on a sports tier, and in some cases the provider had it in SD rather than HD.

So the significance of the agreement that we've reached with Cox this morning and announced this morning, I should say, and the agreement that was reached with Comcast several weeks ago is they're now going to put the Pac-12 national network, and the national network is the one with all 35 football games, over 100 men's basketball games in HD on the expanded basic platform -- all football games, the majority of our basketball games, our Pac-12 men's basketball tournament will be available to the widest population of fans in those territories in HD. So that's going to mean more eyeballs and I think more satisfied fans.

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