

# Fearsome Foursome

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SPORT AND SOCIETY FOR ARETE  
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The much anticipated day of revelation has arrived. No, not the second coming of Bear Bryant, but rather the announcement from the Committee of Justice that yesterday revealed the top four teams in college football. In case you were being held in solitary confinement and missed it, let me reveal to you, in order of quality, the four chosen ones: Alabama, Oregon, Florida State, and Ohio State, sorry, **The** Ohio State University.

Some may wonder what happened to Texas Christian University as it was number three but a week ago, and then beat up the hapless Iowa State team 55-3. Well clearly TCU did not run up the score enough. Then there is Florida State who just last week was number four. They moved up to number three after struggling to beat a decent Georgia Tech team, 37-35. Ohio State won their game over Wisconsin 59-0 using what was basically a third string quarterback, an impressive tribute to Pope Urban's stockpiling of quarterbacks. Baylor who earlier beat TCU finished out of the money, but then they were already out of the money for no apparent reason. All that can be said to both Ohio State and TCU fans is, "Do you believe in miracles?"

What we have learned from this exercise in the art of metaphysical football ranking is that committees seeking to build horses still can produce camels. Second, there are no rules for this process. Third there are two ways to qualify for the position of the elect: Win all your games or have your wish come true which is only possible if you are a member of a big time conference that sucks money out of their fans with a conference championship game.

There seems to be a consensus that Baylor and TCU were the clear choice as teams five and six. This is very reassuring to the two Texas schools and of course totally irrelevant because only four are chosen for the national playoff. Some of the "experts" have claimed that the problem for Baylor and TCU is that the Big Twelve has only ten teams and therefore by NCAA rule could not have a conference championship game.

It totally escapes me as to what relevance this has in terms of being one of the best college football teams in

the country. Are we to assume that somehow they would be better teams if their conference had a championship game? Perhaps in a convoluted way this has a drop of truth in it.

Conference championship games were created for one reason, to make more money for the conference. Therefore if the Big Twelve held such a game they would have more revenue, and this money would allow TCU and Baylor to buy better teams. It might be bad form to point out that it was greed that created these games, and if you are not greedy enough and so have not created this revenue stream, then you are out of step with the money grubbers who run this sport. This makes you unworthy of the big payoff.

Another thing we have learned from this exercise is that a playoff would be better if there were eight teams in the tournament or even sixteen. Those who represent the "Power Five" Conferences (read that "those who are members of this cartel") and those who represent other ancillary interests are already saying, no, eight or sixteen is too many. There are usually only four great teams, or at most six, and so the lesser types must be locked out. The arrogance of this position can only be appreciated fully when you realize that representatives of the "Power Five" have, on more than the rare occasion, suffered losses to the lesser breeds.

It is so much easier to claim elite status in a committee meeting or on a mega-maniacal television sports network, than proving you are elite on the field. The shills at that sports network should be reminded that it was but a short time ago that they were dismissed as being "only cable" and not one of the legitimate "Power Three" networks.

Another immediate lesson to draw from the committee's decision is that the Big Ten is no longer the second rate conference that the football experts have been saying it has been for the last few years. Suddenly winning the Big Ten seems to have some significance at least inside a committee room on a Sunday morning in December.

Then there is the matter of the ghost of Bear Bryant. Clearly the Bear cast a spell over the deliberations of the committee in the previous week. How else is it possible to explain that a team that gave up 630 yards to an also ran in its conference, remained ranked as number one?

Having written all of this I must say that I am delighted to have **The** Ohio State University in the "chosen four." My latest favorite college student-athlete is on this team. He is the third-string, now first string, quarterback for **The** Ohio State University. He is Cardale Jones who two years ago sent out the following tweet strangely reminiscent of Alan Iverson's rant about practice: "Why do we have to go to class if we came here to play FOOTBALL, we ain't come to play SCHOOL, classes are POINTLESS." That is the level of insight you can only hope the average college student acquires at the institutions of the higher learning in America.

On the strength of this tweet alone, **THE** Ohio State belongs in the "chosen four." If you don't believe that they belong just ask the Pope of Columbus who must now be wondering how it is that he will have to go through Nick Saban, whose ominous presence drove him out of the SEC, if he is going to bring a national championship to the Buckheads in Columbus.

On Sport and Society this is Dick Crepeau reminding you that you don't have to be a good sport to be a bad loser.

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