One down, forty-one more to go

by RG

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 The 2021 college football season has just got off to its start on what appears to be the makings for a great season, but it has already canceled a bowl game that was set to be played this according to a story posted on [www.saturdaydownsouth.com](http://www.saturdaydownsouth.com).

The Redbox bowl set as a game between the sixth team of the Pac-12 conference and the seventh team of the Big 10 conference has been canceled just after one week into the season. The funny thing is this cancelation has nothing to do with the COVID-19 pandemic or any of its variants but has everything to with all the ‘shape-shifting’ that is now being experienced within the football conferences throughout the NCAA.

 This action according to Brett McMurphy, a former journalist with ESPN, “will have a domino affect impacting the smaller Group of five conferences.” The cancelation then has been influenced by the money it would potentially generate or the lack thereof to be more precise. As the collegiate movement from one conference to another is based on benefits relating to money for the university, so too is the performance of bowl games. Let’s face it, colleges and universities enjoy the concept of season extending bowl games. It brings in several thousands if not millions of dollars of revenue to the colleges and universities plus the conferences that play the games. So too, it is a tourism cash generating mechanism as well for the locales that host these events. Hospitality, airfare, and restaurants plus souvenir purchases all have positive impacts on the local cities. Eliminating the lesser money producing bowl games has been just a matter of time. Surprisingly, it is strange that it has taken this long to start weeding out the lesser money bowl games, but this can be contributed to the cities committees set to petition and negotiate the hosting of the particular bowl game to the NCAA. With this cancelation, currently the number of bowl games now set to be played has dropped to 41.

 When Oklahoma and Texas announced their departure from the Big 12 Conference a few weeks ago, Kirk Herbstreit was quoted as saying, he had been “naïve” about why teams move. As then it is now, it has been and always will be about money. For us that enjoy watching college football, that two to three week of final college games, which can be a mixture of teams playing each other that would normally do not see each other within a lifetime, is the last hoorah for what we believe to be the extremely shortest season in the whole universe of sports. For once the last bowl game is played, we have to wait another nine months, which can feel like an eternity, before the next season is kicked off. The bowl games bring closure not only to a season but to a year because once you start viewing the bowl games you know the year is drawing to a close.

 The sad truth of the matter is politics, and the influence of money are the two major deciding factors that impact college football for colleges and universities everywhere. But to take a line from Herbstreit, “we all have been naïve” about the influencing power of these two elements, for they have always been there, it is that now they are more prominent and noticeable to all. Money and power impacts all that we do, so when its is announced that a bowl game has been canceled one week into the season, it should not come as any big surprise for just like Corporate America, CFB is about the bottom-line and that is the money they will make playing a game.