

COMMENTARY

TCU welcomed into the Big East Conference

SEAN NEELY
senior reporter

Let's face it, Texas Christian University (TCU) deserves to be in a BCS game. They've earned their dues. Two consecutive undefeated seasons is success that cannot be ignored. So, with unanimous decision, TCU has approved an invitation to the Big East. The membership will be official come July 1, 2012. It's about time.

TCU will no longer be labeled that "BC Buster" team. Now, they can be "the team" one that officially has an automatic bid to a guaranteed spot in one of the big money games. It's automatic access, something they did not have in the Mountain West Conference (MWC).

Of course, the loser here is the MWC. A league that has seen constant shifting will continue to do so with an unforeseen future: A future without TCU in the picture, if you will. The MWC has been constantly changing-adding new teams, and dropping others.

Wind the clocks back to last summer when Boise State announced their new arrival to the MWC. We said goodbye to Utah, who left the MWC to join the PAC-12. Lastly, we have BYU, who have opted to go independent, leaving the MWC. It is rumored that Fresno State, Nevada, and possibly Hawaii could join the

MWC after TCU's 2012 departure.

The departure of TCU from the MWC is a positive step in the right direction.

"[Qualifying status] was a big factor in the move and gives [the Horned Frogs] the greatest opportunity to compete for the national championship," said TCU athletic director Chris Del Conte.

Del Conte also said, "[The MWC] was not the same league that we joined. It was not the same home that we bought, it's not the same home we were invited to, and things changed,

the landscape changed. The MWC is not a league, it's a collection of schools. And there is no doubt that when TCU leaves, the competition will increase. It's a win-win situation in all realities. Texas markets will see an increase in TV ratings due to strong recruiting options. The BCS bowl program will be stronger. So, for all you Big East fans, thank TCU.

Third in this year's BCS standings may not be enough to earn a national championship bid for TCU. They must wait to see if Auburn or Oregon will lose. If neither loses, TCU will most likely see action in this year's Rose Bowl. Until then, the Frogs will bolster their 25 consecutive regular-season wins and await their fate in just one week's time. But, one thing is for sure, and that is TCU's emergence in the Big East, finally.

COMMENTARY

U.S. denied World Cup bid

BRANDON BOYD
opinion editor

Consider it another case of David versus Goliath.

In what has to be considered a head-scratching decision, the 2022 World Cup was awarded to the underdog country of Qatar, who beat out the United States for the right to host. "We go to new lands," FIFA President Sepp Blatter said.

The new lands FIFA goes to are also pretty small. Qatar, which has never even qualified for a World Cup, is 4,416 square miles - smaller in size than Connecticut.

"Basically, oil and natural gas won today. This was not about merit, this was about money," former U.S. national team star Eric Wynalda said in a telephone interview with The Associated Press. Qatar "is a country that is really going to struggle to host this event. A successful World Cup would mean the attendance would be twice the population."

Qatar currently has a population of 1.7 million - 500,000 less than Houston. The choice of this oil-rich country has left many, especially those in the United States, scratching their heads. Despite a general lack of interest in soccer in the United States, they still set World Cup attendance records in 1994 when they hosted the event.

"I consider it a disappointment for me personally, for sure, and a setback as we're trying to move this sport forward," United States Soccer Federation president Sunil Gulati said. "Getting the right to host this event 12 years

from now, with that sort of buildup time, was the equivalent of putting your foot on the accelerator and rally taking a big jump."

Qatar is not capable of holding a successful World Cup event. Qatar's temperature in the summer can reach up to 130 degrees, and while Qatar promised they could overcome the heat with air conditioned outdoor stadiums, some have their doubts. Still, Qatar is obviously thrilled.

"On behalf of millions of people living in the Middle East, thank you," Qatar bid chair Sheikh Mohammad bin Hamad Al-Thani said. "Thank you for believing in us, thank you for having such bold vision. ... Thank you also for acknowledging this is the right time for the Middle East. We have a date with history which is summer 2022."

That date with history, however, could turn out to be a disaster with questions surrounding their capability to host. This is one case in which Goliath should have stomped David. Instead, David won out, and it could end up costing FIFA.



OUTDOOR COLUMN

Western PA seen as best spot for bear season

JAMES WADE
outdoors columnist

As the warm water from the shower hit my body Tuesday night, it was the first time I was warm in 4 days. As I stood there and felt the warmth, I thought in my mind how we didn't get a bear, how hard my crew had hunted, how many miles we had covered, how much time we spent scouting, and how much we anticipated it. This was the 5th year I hunted Pennsylvania Black Bears, and this was supposed to be "the year." Although, my crew did not harvest a bear, I do not look at this as a failure, but more of another opportunity for us next year.

Pennsylvania Black Bear are larger than any other black bear on the continent. Most states in the US would consider a 400 pound animal a large bear. In PA the size has been doubled. In the 2010 Bear season, the 2nd largest bear was shot in PA that had an estimated live weight of 875 pounds. In the past decade, there have been over a dozen bears in PA that were over 725 pounds.

The reason for Pennsylvania's

record lies in the hardwoods present. The mast crop that is offered in the southern part of the country, meet the mast crop offered by the trees in the northern part, smack dab in our state. This huge diversity of food gives the bear population tons of food to eat. Bears are omnivores and could eat acorns, then kill a deer and feed off that the next week.

The bear population is estimated to be around 18,000, scattered in counties throughout the state. Some counties can sustain a bear population and hold hundreds of bears, while other counties in the state have bears that will be sighted moving through the area. Each year the state holds a three day rifle season in which you can harvest a Pennsylvania Black Bear. To hunt these bruins you must have a regular hunting license and a bear tag. The bears are normally hunted by large hunting parties who drive the bears out of hiding and into the cross hairs of a hunter.

The season started this year on Nov. 20 and ended on Nov. 22. I was able to recruit seven of my craziest friends that were up to the challenge.

They were committing themselves as part of my bear crew. We had made plans to hunt in Warren, Venango and McKean counties over the course of bear season. It was called the 2010 Bear Tour, as we stayed in some of our friends' camps throughout the state, with one common goal: harvest a Pennsylvania Black Bear.

The opening morning of bear season and the first day of the Bear Tour had the crew in the Warren County. I had scouted these woods before by myself and had found bear signs, along several locals giving me some tips. As the sun rose from the trees, I realized months of preparation and plans were finally here. The day started with heavy spirits and much optimism. The first drive took place and resulted in no bear. Then we did a few other drives, which again resulted in no bear. As the day went on, all we saw were deer, grouse, turkeys, and squirrels. When we left the woods we went to the bear check station in Tidioute to find out that 3 bear were harvested in the same set of woods we were hunting. It's all about being in the right place at the right time when

hunting these bruins.

The next day of the bear tour took us to Venango County where we had seen bear this summer. The crew rested up and gained four more members. With some fresh legs and whole new area to hunt we were once again optimistic. I thought for sure that we would get a bear on the first drive of the day. I was pushing through the thickest brush I have ever hunted in, and when the drive was almost to an end, I realized that there was no bear, no shots, no yelling, just silence. The second day was amazing, because we hunted mountains that were divided by the Allegheny River. So, no matter where we hunted, wonderful views were seen in every direction.

The final day of bear was upon us. The Bear Tour had taken my crew to Penn State Behrend student Donald Bissel's camp in McKean County. There we were greeted with open beds and a roof over our heads. We had 15 guys that were hunting the next day with us. I had a great feeling about the area, and knew from previous scouting that bear populations were heavy in this area.



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Bear population in Pennsylvania is estimated to be around 18,000. Bear season goes from Nov. 20 - Nov. 22.

When my alarm sounded on the final morning of the season, I was greeted with one noise I did not want to hear; rain. It was pouring outside, but I thought to myself, "I'm this far, I should hunt no matter the weather." The crew from the "Stabbin Cabin" was ready to give it one last hooray. The hunting crew hunted for eight hours in the pouring down rain, without ever producing a bear. It was 3 p.m., we were all soaked, miserable, emotionally drained, and hardly an ounce of optimism left in any of us. The 2010 Bear Tour officially came to an end, with no bear.

The ride home from McKean County was very surreal

As all of my friends in my car were asleep, I was thinking in my head what we could have done differently. I was wondering how close we came to bear, how things could be different, where we could have gone, who else we could have brought, but then I stopped. I realized I have a whole year to plan out the 2011 Bear Tour. I realized that this is not failure it is just another year to learn, another year under my belt, another year that my crew is closer to finally harvesting a Pennsylvania Black Bear. This is the beauty of hunting. Hunting is not always about harvesting game, it's about the memories you make, the people you meet, the places

COMMENTARY

Lady Lions wrap up year with semi-finals loss

CHELSEA MAGNUSEN
staff reporter

With only seven returning players consisting of one senior, one junior, and five sophomores, the Lady Lions volleyball team had a rocky start to their season. There came a point where the girls stood up and said "losing is no longer an option." The Lady Lions kicked it into full gear and turned the numbers around instantly. A 3-0 defeat over conference team Hilbert put the girls on the road to an eleven game winning streak. The energy burst through the locker-room. Even through injuries, the Lady Lions went on to show their passion on the court.

Ending their conference regular season record at 18-10, the girls beat Mt. Aloysius to put them in the third seed for the AMCC Playoffs. With this finish, the girls ended up playing Mt. Aloysius, yet again, in the first round of the AMCC playoffs.

They went on to win 3-0. With Jessica Woods finishing the match with a block, the Lady Lions were on their way to the semi-finals of the AMCCs to face the winner of the Medaille vs. Penn State Altoona match that following Friday.

The Lions would face Altoona who had beaten them earlier in the season in a five game loss. The match was a rocky one with scores of 25-20, 25-18 and 25-20 in Altoona's favor. Each player contributed to the game and worked hard, but just couldn't come out on top. This would put an end to the girl's chance at the Championship against hosting team Pitt Bradford. Bradford went on to beat Altoona in the Championship in four games.

With doubts in their minds about the possibility of post-season tournament action, the ladies awaited an answer. As Monday rolled around, the answer was finally in. The Lady Lions would go on as the 8th seeded team to play the number one team,

St. Vincent in the ECAC Tournament.

The game at St. Vincent wasn't going to be an easy win. With strong

intentions of knocking the top seeded team from the tournament, the Lady Lions unfortunately lost in a four game match. The Bearcats had

home court advantage as well as a large group of fans that cheered them on.

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