

Win On the Field

January 8, 2018

Tonight, the College Football Playoff (CFP) National Championship Presented by AT&T will pit the University of Alabama Crimson Tide (12-1) against the University of Georgia Bulldogs (13-1). Millions of Americans will tune in to see the game's winner declared "national champion."

Regardless, University of Central Florida Athletic Director Danny White, after UCF won the Peach Bowl to finish the season 13-0, stated emphatically, "National champs. Undefeated."*

What's going on here? Well, UCF wasn't ranked in the top four or chosen for the four-team

The whole point of the College Football Playoff is to have the champion decided on the field of play — not in a backroom by computers and politics.

championship playoff. Coming from the American Athletic Conference, UCF's strength of schedule was far below that of Alabama, Clemson, Georgia and Oklahoma — all representing major conferences.

But strength of schedule is not *everything*; it should not trump what takes place on the field. Alabama, Georgia and UCF all played Auburn University. Alabama lost to Auburn. Georgia lost to Auburn,



too, but then played again weeks later in the Southeastern Conference championship game and beat Auburn. On the other hand, the UCF Knights defeated Auburn on New Year's Day, 34-27.

The whole point of the College Football Playoff is to have the champion decided on the field of play — not in a backroom by computers and politics.

As happened this year.

The CFP should go to an eight-team playoff, which would allow any undefeated team, even from less prestigious conferences, to be included.

Isn't this awfully reminiscent of U. S. presidential campaigns? There, so-called "minor" party candidates are prevented from appearing in the debates — and thus removed from competition not by votes but by private poll results. Often before most voters have heard anything about them.

Let winners be decided on the field and at the ballot box. *Not* by backroom experts limiting opportunities.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.

** Apparently, UCF is putting its money where its mouth is: paying out \$325,000 in contracted bonuses to the coaching staff for winning a national championship.*