

Big Ten Considering Elimination Of East, West Divisions



Ohio State's revised 2022 schedule was released a couple of weeks back, and while that is set in stone, there could be changes on the horizon for 2023 and beyond.

According to a report from The Athletic, Iowa athletic director Gary Barta said the conference could eliminate divisions or changing the number of conference games depending on the future format of the College Football Playoff.

Currently, the Big Ten has its 14 teams split between the East and West divisions. Each team plays a nine-game conference season that features each team in their division and three crossover games.

Since the East and West divisions were introduced in 2014, the East has dominated, with Ohio State, Penn State, Michigan and Michigan State among the conference's top teams. The East is also undefeated in the Big Ten Conference Championship Game, an unblemished 8-0 with an average margin of victory of 20 points.

According to the report, Big Ten administrators have discussed dropping the number of conference games down to eight, allowing the opportunity to schedule more games with fellow member of "The Alliance" in the Pac-12 and ACC.

Also part of the discussion is ending divisional play entirely, instead opting for teams to play three set opponents each year and cycling through the remaining 10 conference teams over the course of two years.

"We've had several conversations," Barta said. "One of the things that we're watching is whether it's related to The Alliance, which we're talking through and/or, what gives us the best opportunity to have the most success in the College Football Playoff format?"

"We're wondering if we're going to know what the format is before we have to make that decision. So, we're kind of waiting to see where that lands. But we have had active conversations about the schedule beyond 2022."