

# Clemson Head Coach Dabo Swinney Doubles Down On His Ranking Of Ohio State In Coaches Poll



Clemson head coach Dabo Swinney has doubled down on his belief that Ohio State did not play enough games to qualify for the College Football Playoff.

“Obviously, they’re a great team,” Swinney said in an interview with ESPN’s Tom Rinaldi on Saturday. “They’re plenty good enough and talented enough to beat us and good enough to win the national championship. But in my opinion, I don’t think that it’s right that three teams have to play 13 games to win it all and one team has to play eight.

“What universe am I living in? And it has nothing to do with them. It was about qualifying. And I didn’t think they were qualified, based on the number of games, versus all these other teams. In my opinion, Texas A&M, Florida, Oklahoma and Cincinnati got punished for playing more games.”

Swinney was also asked about his decision to rank the Buckeyes 11th in the Amway Coaches Poll, which was five spots lower than any other coach with a ballot; Georgia’s Kirby Smart had Ohio State sixth.

“First of all, my vote don’t mean anything,” Swinney said. “But it means something to me, you know? It’s my poll. I do it. It creates a stir because we just so happen to be playing Ohio State. It has nothing to do with Ohio State. Absolutely zero. You can change the name to Michigan or Georgia or Florida or Tennessee or Nebraska.

“Anytime you have a top-10 (ranking), it should be that special. This year, it’s like really, really, really special, and I wanted it to be that way. I wanted to recognize the teams that played nine games or more. If you didn’t play nine games, I just didn’t consider you from the top 10. That’s why they were (No.) 11.”

Regardless of Swinney’s opinion, the Buckeyes earned the No. 3 seed in the College Football Playoff and will play his second-ranked Tigers in the Sugar Bowl on Jan. 1 (8 p.m. on ESPN).

***For four free issues of the now-weekly print edition of Buckeye Sports Bulletin, sign up at the link below. No credit card required: <http://www.buckeyesports.com/subscribe-4issue-trial/>***