ACC Championship Game

The Dr Pepper ACC Football Championship Game is an American college football game held on the first Saturday in December by the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) each year to determine its football champion . The game pits the champion of the Coastal Division against the champion of the Atlantic Division in a game that follows the conclusion of the regular season . The game 's corporate sponsor is Dr Pepper . The current champion are the Clemson Tigers of the Atlantic Division .

History

Before the 2004 college football season , the Atlantic Coast Conference determined its champion via round @-@ robin play during the course of the regular season and there was no conference championship game . In 2004 , the Atlantic Coast conference added two teams ? Virginia Tech and Miami ? expanding the league to 11 teams . At the time , college football teams were limited by the NCAA to 11 regular @-@ season games , three or four of which typically featured teams outside the home team 's conference . Following the 2004 season , the league added a 12th team ? Boston College ? and became eligible to hold a championship game at the conclusion of the 2005 season .
  The conference was divided into two divisions of six teams each . The team with the best conference record in each division is selected to participate in the championship game . In the inaugural championship game , which took place at the end of the 2005 college football season , the Florida State Seminoles defeated Virginia Tech 27 ? 22 at Alltel Stadium in Jacksonville , Florida . In the 2006 game , two other teams faced off as Georgia Tech played Wake Forest . Wake defeated Georgia Tech 9 ? 6 . For the 2007 game , Jacksonville was awarded a one @-@ year extension as host , and the game remained in Jacksonville . Virginia Tech returned to the ACC Football Championship game and faced off against Boston College . Tech won the game , 30 ? 16 , and returned to the championship in 2008 to defeat Boston College again 30 ? 12 . In 2009 , Georgia Tech defeated Clemson , 39 ? 34 , but was forced to vacate the ACC championship by the NCAA .
  Following the 2007 game the Gator Bowl Committee ? organizers of the ACC Football Championship game in Jacksonville ? announced they would not seek another contract extension due to falling attendance . With Jacksonville 's withdrawal from future site selection , the ACC selected Tampa , Florida and Charlotte , North Carolina as future sites of the game . The 2008 and 2009 games were held in Tampa , while the 2010 and 2011 games were held in Charlotte . In 2008 , the Coastal Division champion was the designated " home " team .

Conference expansion

In 1990 , the eight @-@ team Atlantic Coast Conference added Florida State to the league , creating a new nine @-@ team ACC . Though Florida State was the only school added to the conference , some league officials discussed offering one or more other schools ? Navy , Pittsburgh , Syracuse , South Carolina , Miami , West Virginia , Boston College , Rutgers , or Virginia Tech ? an offer to join the league . For various reasons , however , no other team was extended an offer . Throughout the 1990s , the Atlantic Coast Conference remained at nine members . Ironically , South Carolina was a charter member of the ACC that left in 1971 .
  The nearby Southeastern Conference (SEC) , which also encompasses college football teams in the American South , also expanded in 1990 . Instead of adding one team , as did the ACC , the then 10 @-@ team SEC added two ? the University of Arkansas and the University of South Carolina . The expansion made the SEC the first 12 @-@ school football conference and thus the first eligible to hold a conference championship game under NCAA rules (the first game was held in 1992) . The SEC enjoyed increased television ratings and revenue through the 1990s and by 2003 was earning over $ 100 million annually , with revenues shared out among member schools .
  Officials of other leagues took note of the financial boon that followed SEC expansion to twelve teams . Atlantic Coast Conference representatives began discussing expansion to twelve schools in the first years of the new century , who began publicly pursuing the possibility of expansion anew in

2003 . On May 13 , 2003 , representatives voted in favor of extending invitations to three schools . The only certain school was the University of Miami , while the other two spots were still being debated . Initially , the league favored admitting Miami , Syracuse University , and Boston College . After a month of debate , however , the ACC elected to extend formal invitations to Miami , Boston College , and Virginia Tech , which joined after initially being overlooked . This came years after these schools were considered for ACC membership in the early 1990s but nothing had ever came to fruition . Pittsburgh and Syracuse would also eventually join the ACC after rejections in 1990 and 2003 , becoming members in 2013 .

Miami and Virginia Tech began official ACC play with the 2004 college football season . After the league settled a lawsuit resulting from the departure of the three former Big East Conference teams , Boston College began ACC play in the 2005 season . With the league officially at 12 teams , it became eligible to hold a conference championship football game .

= = Site selection = =

Even before the announcement proclaiming the ACC 's expansion to 12 teams , several cities and sports organizations were preparing bids to host the ACC Football Championship Game . The prospect of tens of thousands of visitors could provide a multimillion @-@ dollar economic boost for a host city and region while requiring few , if any , additional facilities . One early contender was the city of Charlotte , North Carolina . Even before Virginia Tech , Miami , and Boston College were chosen as the ACC 's picks to expand , Carolinas Stadium Corporation , the owner and operator of Charlotte 's Ericsson Stadium (as it was called then) lobbied heavily for Charlotte 's selection . Other early options included Orlando , Tampa , Atlanta , and Jacksonville .

Shortly after negotiations for the location of the game began during the spring of 2004 , the ACC announced that it had signed a new , seven @-@ year television contract with ABC @-@ TV and ESPN . As part of the deal , the ACC would earn over $ 40 million in revenue a year in exchange for the networks ' exclusive right to televise the ACC Football Championship Game along with several high @-@ profile regular season games . Revenues would be divided among the 12 ACC member schools .

In July 2004 the ACC began deliberations about which bid to accept . On August 19 , 2004 , league officials announced that Jacksonville would host the game in 2005 and 2006 . The league would then have the option to re @-@ select Jacksonville for an additional one or two @-@ year contract . Charlotte was the first runner @-@ up in the competition .

For its first three years , the championship game was held at EverBank Field (known as Alltel Stadium in 2005 and 2006 and Jacksonville Municipal Stadium in 2007) . That contract expired after the 2007 season . In December 2007 , the ACC awarded the next four games to Tampa (first two) and Charlotte (next two) . Raymond James Stadium was the venue for the Tampa games in 2008 and 2009 , while the Bank of America Stadium provided the venue for the Charlotte games in 2010 and 2011 . Charlotte hosted the game again in 2012 and 2013 . In February 2014 it was announced that Charlotte would continue to host the game through at least 2019 .

= = Team selection = =

Following the absorption of Virginia Tech and Miami into the ACC , questions arose about how an 11 @-@ team league could fairly select participants in the conference championship game . A divisional structure involving two six @-@ team divisions competing for two championship @-@ game slots would not be possible . In addition , the ACC could not continue to select its champion via round @-@ robin play since there were now 11 teams and only seven or eight conference games available per team . Even the NCAA 's addition of a 12th game to the regular season did little to relieve the conference 's problem . Prior to the 2004 college football season , the ACC requested a waiver to the NCAA 's rule requiring conferences to have 12 @-@ plus teams before having a conference championship game . Before the season began , however , the NCAA rejected the ACC 's application , and the league had to use a semi @-@ round @-@ robin format to select a

champion during the 2004 football season . After that season , the inclusion of Boston College as the ACC 's 12th team solved the problem of enabling the ACC to have a championship football game .

On October 18 , 2004 , the ACC announced its new football structure with two divisions . Each six @-@ team division plays a round @-@ robin schedule within the division and a rotation of three conference games against teams from the opposing division . The two teams with the best conference records in each division earn places to the championship game . In the event of a tie in records within one division , divisional records and the results of head @-@ to @-@ head games are considered .

Also , in the games between the two divisions , each team has a permanent rival team that is played every year . Hence , every year , there are these football games : Georgia Tech vs. Clemson ; North Carolina vs. North Carolina State ; Louisville vs. Virginia ; Syracuse vs. Pittsburgh ; Duke vs. Wake Forest ; Florida State vs. Miami ; and Boston College vs. Virginia Tech .

Notre Dame joined the conference as a non @-@ divisional member in 2014 and , while playing five ACC teams each season , is not eligible for the championship game .

= = = Divisions = = =

Non @-@ divisional :
Notre Dame

= = Results = =

Winners are listed in bold . Rankings are from the Coaches Poll released prior to the game .
* Georgia Tech was forced to vacate this win due to NCAA violations .

= = Results by team = =

* Georgia Tech appeared in four ACC Football Championship Games , but the Yellow Jackets ' one win was later vacated .
Louisville , Miami , North Carolina State , Pittsburgh , Syracuse , and Virginia have yet to make an appearance in an ACC Football Championship Game .