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The Finance Behind Conference Realignment

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Oral Presentation O2.2

THE FINANCE BEHIND CONFERENCE REALIGNMENT

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The landscape of college sports, specifically football, has been changing due to the rapid pace of conference realignment among schools in the “Big Six” conferences. In this study, we identify the main determinants of the decision to switch conferences and assess the immediate financial impact triggered by such a decision. Using hand-collected data on Division 1 college football for the period of 2002-2011, we investigate the role played by school-specific and economic factors on conference realignment.