

## Risky Business Week 17

### CFP Semifinals – Dumb and Dumber

Alert: The following analysis addresses two almost trivially unimportant decisions that occurred during the College Football Playoff semifinals this past weekend. Now that has been said, let's see why they are so interesting. Despite their extraordinarily low impact on GWC, both of these choices reflected a disappointing surrender from two of the most prominent football coaches in the NCAA.

#### Semifinal #1

With only 56 seconds remaining in the game, Notre Dame managed to score a touchdown against Alabama bringing the score to 31-13. The only possible path to victory at this point was the extremely unlikely parlay of: 1) a successful two-point conversion, 2) on-side kick recovery, 3) quick touchdown, 4) successful two-point conversion, 5) another on-side kick recovery, 6) another quick touchdown, 7) successful two-point conversion, 8) win in Overtime. There you have it, a winning parlay with very low prospects (perhaps somewhere between 1 in 50,000 to 1 in 100,000), but not impossible. Brian Kelly decided to kick the extra point to accept a 17-point deficit and eliminate any possible winning path. He then decided to on-side kick anyhow, and recovered it! No one is suggesting he could have actually won this game but why wouldn't he at least try, and most importantly send a message to his players and fans that the Fighting Irish never give up.

#### Semifinal #2

Trailing 42-21 at the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, Clemson appeared ready to attempt a first down on their own 22-yard line. A false start penalty left them with a 4<sup>th</sup> and 6 on their own 17-yard line and they immediately brought in the punting unit to hand the ball back to the nearly unstoppable Ohio State offense. A minute later, the Buckeyes stretched their lead to 49-21. One has to wonder how Dabo Swinney was planning on winning this game by voluntarily giving up possession. The Tigers would have to stop the Buckeyes from scoring three times and score three touchdowns of their own in the final 14 minutes to have any chance. While this parlay is not nearly as improbable as Notre Dame's surrender, it appears Clemson could have more than doubled their chances by going for it from approximately 1 in 250 to 1 in 100.

In both games the conclusion was hardly in doubt, but with so much on the line it is inexcusable to not at least make an attempt at a winning path. As Lloyd Christmas knows, you have to try when you have a chance.