

Blockbuster Bowl Seeks To Break Bowl Alliance

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The Blockbuster Bowl's 11th hour bid to break up the Major Bowl Alliance is giving the Big East and Atlantic Coast [Conference](#) pause before sealing a deal with the alliance.

Blockbuster Entertainment Chairman Wayne Huizenga personally stepped forward to back a proposal he hopes makes [dollars](#) and sense to Big East and ACC athletic directors. Still, the offer's a long shot and is probably too late.

"I wouldn't view it as a long shot," said Ken Haines, executive vice president of Raycom Inc, which holds rights to the [game](#). "I would say it's a realistic shot. Our indication is the proposal is being taken very seriously."

The Blockbuster Bowl is proposing to pit the champions of the Big East and ACC in an annual game at Joe Robbie Stadium. The bowl is offering a 10-year agreement guaranteeing \$4.3 million per team, a payoff that would be second only to the Rose Bowl. The Blockbuster ante is up from \$1.6 million per team last year.

Raycom arranged for Huizenga -- owner of the Florida Marlins expansion [baseball team](#) -- to meet with Big East Commissioner Mike Tranghese and ACC Commissioner Gene Corrigan in Atlanta last week.

"Mr. Huizenga was very forthright, very open and extremely impressive," Tranghese said. "What he proposed was significant enough that I couldn't make a decision on it. The athletic directors will meet and decide."

The Big East will consider the proposal in a conference meeting Tuesday in Newark, N.J.

"It's something that warrants discussion," UM Athletic Director Dave Maggard said. "I don't have any preconceived notion about it in terms of favoring it or not. I think it's late, but nonetheless it deserves consideration."

Still, details of the Major Bowl Alliance agreement were finalized in a meeting in [New York](#) last week. It unites the Orange, Sugar, Cotton and Fiesta bowls and their host conferences with the Big East, ACC and Notre Dame.

Alliance organizers forged ahead in last week's meeting despite the Blockbuster proposal. A contractual agreement is being drawn up and is expected to be signed next week by alliance members.

"We have to have it signed," Orange Bowl [Executive Director](#) Steve Hatchell said.

Tranghese and Corrigan were guiding forces behind the alliance. They have worked more than a year to resolve details. Tranghese says he remains committed to the alliance.

Orange Bowl President Harper Davidson Jr. said the Big East and ACC assured the rest of the alliance they were still committed to the plan in last week's meeting.

"If they decided to back out of the alliance, it would be a whole new ballgame," Davidson said. "My reaction is this is a little late. Where was the Blockbuster Bowl with this six months ago?"