

FCS playoff expanding to 24 teams for 2013

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The Pioneer League champion will join 10 other conference winners as automatic qualifiers for the Football Championship Subdivision playoffs, beginning in 2013. The move is part of a plan, approved by the NCAA Division I Championships/Sport Management Cabinet this month, expanding the playoffs from 20 to 24 teams. The top eight teams will be

seeded, receive first-round byes and host second-round games. The 16 other teams will bid to host first-round games. The 20-year-old Pioneer League is a football-only, non-scholarship league. It has never had an automatic bid, let alone a participant in the playoffs. The Ivy League and the Southwestern Athletic Conference play at the FCS level but choose not to participate in the playoffs. There are 124 FCS teams this year.