

good sportsmanship prevails in the competitive arena.

The BCS was designed to ensure that the top two schools in the country have a chance to play each other for the national title. I am proud that another California school, the University of Southern California Trojans, will play number two ranked Oklahoma in the Orange Bowl.

If the top team from the Pac Ten cannot play in the Rose Bowl because it is playing for the national title, fans expect to see the next best school from the conference take its place.

And, make no mistake about it, Cal has earned a right to play in the Rose Bowl.

Led by Head Coach Jeff Tedford, quarterback Aaron Rodgers, defensive end Ryan Riddle, and running back J.J. Arrington, Cal won 10 and lost only once—on the road at USC—beating teams by an average of 23.9 points per game. They were the only team to rank in the top six both in scoring and scoring defense.

In the end, despite beating Southern Mississippi 26-16 to win their final game of the year, Cal lost points in the ESPN/USA Today coaches poll—one of the polls that accounts for 33 per cent of the BCS rankings—and thus was edged out by Texas for the opportunity to play in the Rose Bowl.

Let me be clear: The Texas Longhorns had a great season, and I have a lot of respect for the university and their coaches and players.

But, Cal led Texas in the BCS rankings for most of the season and it is common sense to me that if a team is in position to earn a trip to the Rose Bowl and they win their last four games of the season—as Cal did—they should not be denied an opportunity to play in that game.

Surely we can find a way to preserve the best traditions of college football and ensure that teams that earn an opportunity play in a major bowl, are allowed to do so.

In their last game, Cal had an opportunity to score another touchdown when the result of the game was no longer in doubt. Instead, Coach Tedford decided to let the clock run out. Perhaps another score would have impressed enough voters in the coaches poll to give Cal a chance to play in the Rose Bowl. But Coach Tedford did the right thing and college football should reward those decisions, not penalize them.

Nothing can detract from Cal's great season and I am confident that the team will bring home a win in the Holiday Bowl on December 30. I wish them the best of luck.●

REMEMBERING RICHARD K. SORENSON

● Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a man of remarkable courage, compassion, and patriotism and to join Nevadans and Americans in mourning the loss of

American patriot and former Marine Richard K. Sorenson.

A shining example of just how one individual can make a difference is found in the life story of Richard K. "Rick" Sorenson.

Born the 28th day of August in 1924, Sorenson tried unsuccessfully to enlist in the Navy on the day after Pearl Harbor. He was only 17 at the time, and his parents refused to give their permission. He finished his junior year in high school, but the next fall, the day after football season ended, he and some of his teammates joined the Marine Corps.

Little did Rick Sorenson know, but he would soon make history.

On February 1, 1944, at the age of 19, Private Sorenson and his five man machine gun squad found themselves part of the amphibious assault of Namur, a small island in the Kwajalein atoll which was defended by 4,000 Japanese soldiers fighting from heavy concrete fortifications.

At dawn the following morning, the Japanese counterattacked Sorenson's position in what he later called a "full-fledged banzai charge." His squad had been fighting for its life for half an hour when a Japanese soldier got close enough to throw a grenade in their midst. Sorenson's first impulse was to jump to the other side of the concrete foundation, but he instantly realized that his buddies would take the impact and that the entire squad would be overrun, so he threw himself on the grenade and took the full force of the explosion.

For his actions he was awarded the Medal of Honor. His citation was signed by Franklin D. Roosevelt and read, in part: "For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty . . . Unhesitatingly, and with complete disregard for his own safety, Private Sorenson hurled himself upon the deadly weapon, heroically taking the full impact of the explosion. As a result of his gallant action, he was severely wounded, but the lives of his comrades were saved. His great personal valor and exceptional spirit of self-sacrifice in the face of almost certain death were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

Sorenson would undergo six operations over the next nine months. But he survived and went on to graduate from college, marry, and raise a family. He was also recalled to active duty with the Marines in 1950 during the Korean War and was commissioned a first lieutenant.

After eventually leaving the Marines for good in 1955, he returned to civilian life and pursued a career as an insurance underwriter before finally joining the Veterans' Administration. In 1978 he transferred to Reno, NV, and assumed duties as Director of Veterans Affairs for all of Nevada and nine counties in California. He retired in 1985 but remained a resident of Reno until his passing several months ago.

Those who lived through World War II are often referred to as our Greatest Generation. And that Greatest Generation is well represented in the life story of Rick Sorenson. He was not only a battle-tested Marine but he also was a loving husband, father, and grandfather. In his vocation he served other veterans, and in his free time he was active in community affairs.

Simply stated, the world is a better place because of Rick Sorenson.

To Rick's wife Milli I offer the condolences and the admiration of Nevadans and Americans. This great nation that Rick Sorenson risked his life for and lived his life for will always be grateful for his contributions.●

RECOGNIZING A RACING STAR

● Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize and congratulate an outstanding athlete and a tremendous competitor from my home State of Nevada.

A Las Vegas native, Kurt Busch is the epitome of a team player who thrives on pressure and has the utmost respect for his competition.

His journey to the finish line of the NASCAR Nextel Cup title started in go carts and dwarf cars in Pahump and Las Vegas. Kurt and his brother, Kyle, shared their father Tom's love for racing, and once Kurt hit the track there was no stopping him.

His career highlights start with the Las Vegas Motor Speedway and the Nevada State Dwarf Car Rookie of the Year and Champion in 1994 and 1995 respectively. From there he broadened his horizons to the Southwest Series after graduating from Durango High School in Las Vegas. Durango High School is the home of the Trailblazers, and Kurt's road to champion race-car driver at the age of 26 certainly blazed a trail or two along the way.

Since those early Las Vegas days, Kurt has been an incredible presence in the American racing scene. He competed and finished above expectation time and time again. He started this season with the goal of winning the championship. There were no guarantees in this Cup season though. Kurt stayed focused, and keeping his eye on the prize paid off. But it was a nail biter. Kurt faced many hurdles that would have meant the end for a lesser competitor. There was the broken wheel, the late restart, and the intense competition. And those challenges all came in the last race at the Homestead-Miami Speedway.

Mechanical failures and pressures aside, racing fans attribute Kurt's success to his consistency. I say it's all about heart.

Following his victory, Kurt stated matter-of-factly: "This is what a team does to win a championship . . . I'd like to put a cap on today and move on to what we did this year as a team, which is unbelievable. This championship is for Jimmy Fennig and everyone that's put work into this car."