

Michael Slive, Who Led the SEC to New Heights, Is Dead at 77

By **Marc Tracy**

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Michael L. Slive, the former Southeastern Conference commissioner who was instrumental in turning it into arguably the most prominent college sports conference in the country, died on Wednesday in Birmingham, Ala. He was 77.

His death was announced by the SEC. The conference did not specify a cause.

Slive, who became the conference commissioner in 2002, was an influential champion for the College Football Playoff, which was implemented in 2014. And he considered it an important part of his legacy that, in 2003, Mississippi State made Sylvester Croom the first black head football coach in the conference's history.

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