



HEAD COACH JON EMBREE



Jon Embree was named the 24th full-time head football coach (and the 26th overall including two interim) in University of Colorado history on December 6, 2010, returning home to the state where he starred as a player in both high school and college as well as where he got his start in coaching.

Though this is his first head coaching position on any level, he brings 18 years of coaching experience to the CU program. That includes 10 seasons (1993-2002) as an assistant on the Colorado staff under three different head coaches, Bill McCartney (1993-94), Rick Neuheisel (1995-98) and Gary Barnett (1999-2002).

A stalwart tight end for the Buffaloes in the mid-1980s after an outstanding prep career at Cherry Creek High School, Embree returned to his alma mater from the National Football League's Washington Redskins, where he was in the process of completing his first season as tight ends coach under former Denver Bronco coach Mike Shanahan.

Embree, 45, is the first African-American ever named to the position at Colorado. He signed a five-year contract through the 2015 season upon being offered the position one month after previous head coach, Dan Hawkins, was relieved of his duties. Embree concluded his tenure as tight ends coach with the Redskins the day before he was introduced by athletic director Mike Bohn as CU's new head coach.

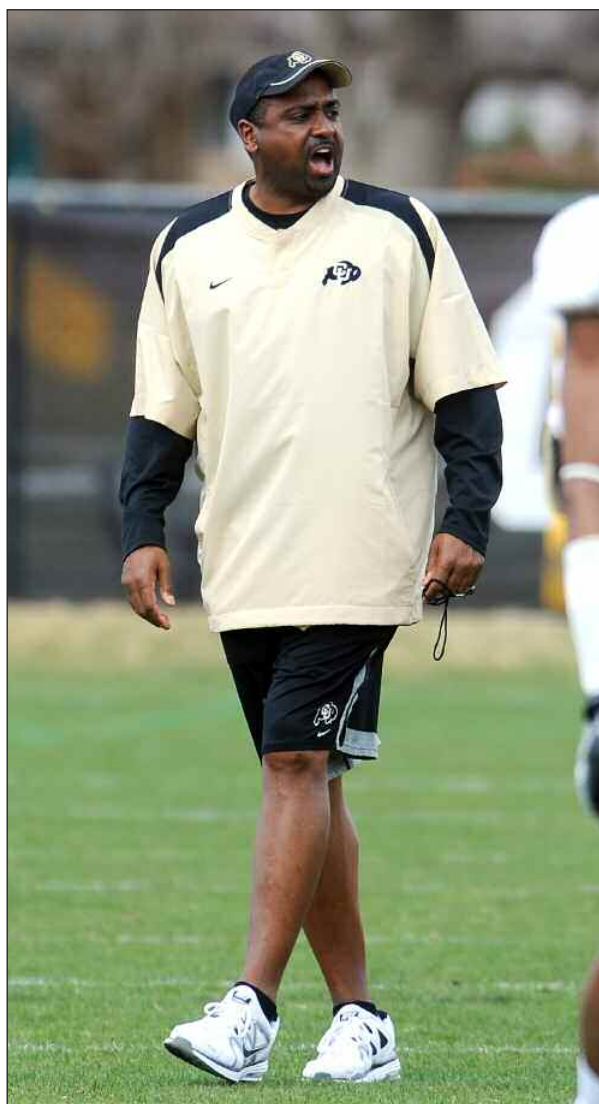
"This is a dream come true," Embree said. "When I stepped on the field for my first spring practice here as a volunteer coach (in 1991), I started to envision what it would be like to come back one day and be the head coach of this great university. It's truly a privilege when you have the opportunity to become head coach at your alma mater. Colorado has a great tradition and with the staff I've assembled, our aim is to restore the program to national prominence."

Embree, in fact, is just Colorado's third head football coach and the first in nearly 50 years who also graduated from the school, earning his degree in Communication in 1988. The last was Bud Davis ('51), who coached for one season (1962) to steady the waters after the Sonny Grandelius era, with the only other, Harry Heller, also coaching just one year, leading Colorado to an 8-1 record in 1894; Heller was an 1885 CU graduate.

"There is no question Jon is a great Buffalo, and we're all excited he's coming home," Bohn said. "He's a man of great character and vision who loves the University of Colorado. As a high school student-athlete, he could have went anywhere in the country and he chose CU at a time the program had been struggling for a number of years. He was a pivotal contributor in helping to turn the fortunes around some 25 years ago, and we are excited he's agreed to come back and lead us into the Pac-12 Conference."

"Jon Embree is a great hire for the University of Colorado at a great time in our history," said CU-Boulder Chancellor Phil DiStefano. "Jon was a legendary Buff who embodied the best of CU's values on and off the field. I believe his achievements as a student-athlete, a coach and a person will combine to lead our program into a new era of success. We are excited to welcome him home, and are looking forward to next season."

Embree became just the fourth African-American head coach in Pac-12 Conference football history when he was named to the CU position (with Stanford's David Shaw the fifth when he was promoted a month later): Dennis Green was the first when he coached Stanford (1989-91), followed by Ty Willingham, also at

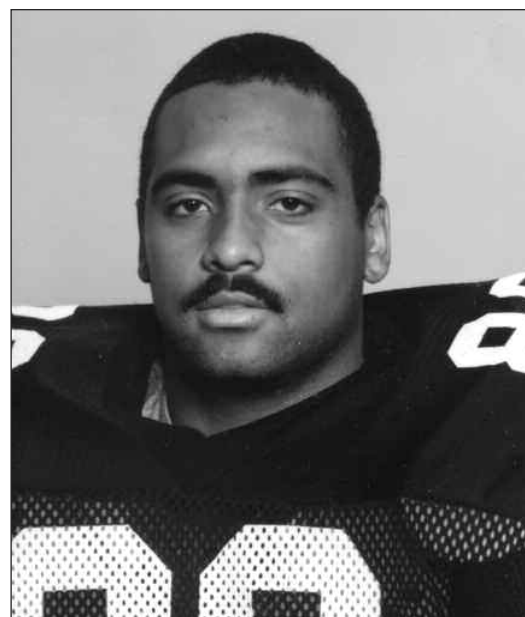




Stanford (1995-2001), and then former Colorado assistant Karl Dorrell at UCLA (2003-07); Willingham also was the head coach at Washington (2004-08). Nationally, Embree is one of seven African-American head coaches among the 66 BCS schools and among the 17 at the 120 Football Bowl Subdivision programs.

After a stellar prep career at Cherry Creek High School in Englewood, he was a key member of the 1983 recruiting class, the first by McCartney, who had taken over as head coach just two months before the start of the '82 season. McCartney made a pitch to the top in-state recruits to pledge their allegiance to CU and to help turn around a program that had won just nine games over the previous four years. Embree and several others listened, and McCartney was on the money with what the group would accomplish.

Embree would become a four-year letterman for the Buffaloes, playing immediately as a true freshman in '83 when he earned the school's Lee Willard Award as the school's most outstanding freshman. The following year, he earned first-team All-Big 8 honors in setting school single-season records for receptions (51) and receiving yards (680). When CU moved to the wishbone on offense for his junior year, his receiving numbers naturally went down but he established himself as one of the premier blocking tight ends in the game. He ended his career in the top five in both catches (80) and yards (1,116), numbers which still have him in the school's top 20 today.



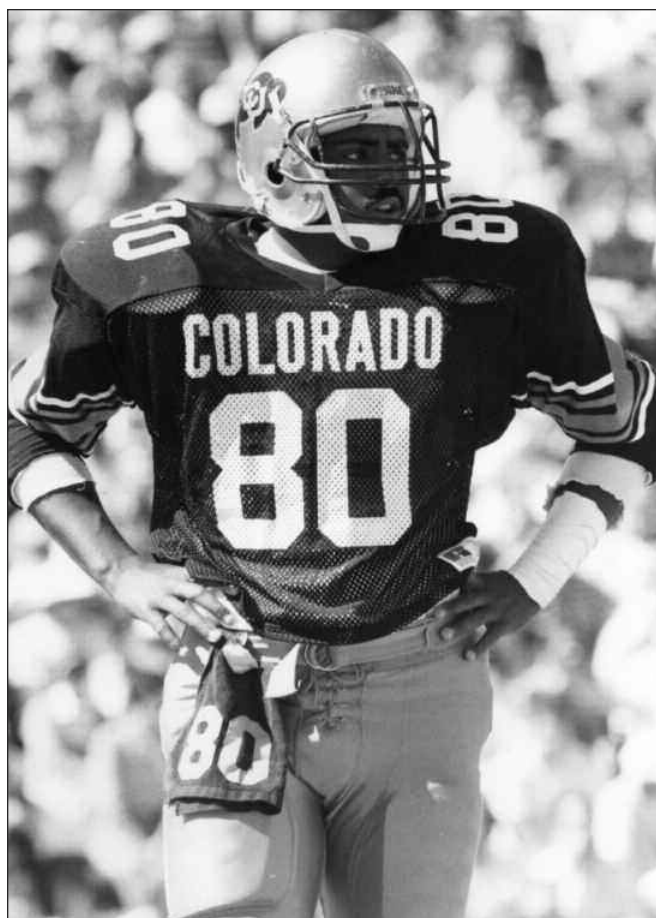
After 4-7 and 1-10 records his first two years, the move to the wishbone helped the Buffs to 7-5 and 6-6 records Embree's last two seasons, including appearances in the Freedom and Bluebonnet bowls. The 13 wins over the '85 and '86 seasons were one fewer than Colorado had from 1979-84, the 14 being the fewest in college football; McCartney's plan to win with home grown talent had worked, and no one played a bigger role in that than Embree.

In 1989, fans selected CU's All-Century Team, with the 53-man team commemorating the school's first 100 years of intercollegiate football; no modern day tight ends made the first team, but Embree joined such Buffalo stalwarts as J.V. Cain, Don Hasselbeck and Jerry Hillebrand on the honorable mention squad, placing him among the best tight ends in school history.

A sixth round selection by the Los Angeles Rams in the 1987 NFL Draft, Embree played two seasons with the Rams before suffering a career-ending elbow injury in 1989 while a member of the Seattle Seahawks. He underwent "Tommy John" surgery, which requires at least a year of rehab, and he opted to turn his attention to a career outside of football. Having interned at two Denver television stations while a student at CU, he worked with his former colleagues at KCNC-TV in Denver to try and place him in a smaller market with the plan that he eventually could return to Denver.

In the midst of pursuing a television career, McCartney recruited him again, this time as a volunteer coach for the tight ends for the 1991 season. Embree had never really thought of coaching before that call, but after just one day on the field that spring, he knew it was his calling. He told Mac he loved it, but left out that he "wanted his job." From that moment on, it was his goal to become the head coach at his alma mater.





So he began his coaching career in March 1991 as a volunteer coach under McCartney, and then worked as an assistant coach at Douglas County (Colo.) High School the following year before returning CU for his first full-time position in the profession, coaching the tight ends for the last two years of McCartney's tenure. Under Neuheisel, he swapped sides of the football and tutored the defensive ends for those four seasons, before mentoring the tight ends once again in Barnett's first two years. He then switched to coaching the receivers and placekickers the next two years (2001-02), helping CU win its only Big 12 Conference title in '01, while both those squads claimed North Division titles in going 14-2 in league play over two seasons, one of the best two-year marks in the now-defunct 12-team conference's history.

As an assistant at Colorado, the Buffaloes posted an 81-39-1 record, 89-42-2 including his volunteer season; including that campaign, he coached in nine bowl games in the 11 seasons, including three New Year's Day games (all Fiesta bowls).

Embree left Colorado to join Dorrell when he was named head coach at UCLA ahead of the 2003 season. Embree coached the receivers there his first season, and then was promoted to assistant head coach and passing game coordinator in addition to tight ends coach for the 2004 and 2005 seasons. He then made his move into the NFL, where he coached the tight ends for three seasons (2006-08) under Herm Edwards with the Kansas City Chiefs.

In his career, Embree coached four of the best tight ends



Embree greets Ed Reinhardt, his teammate who survived a serious brain injury suffered at Oregon in 1984.

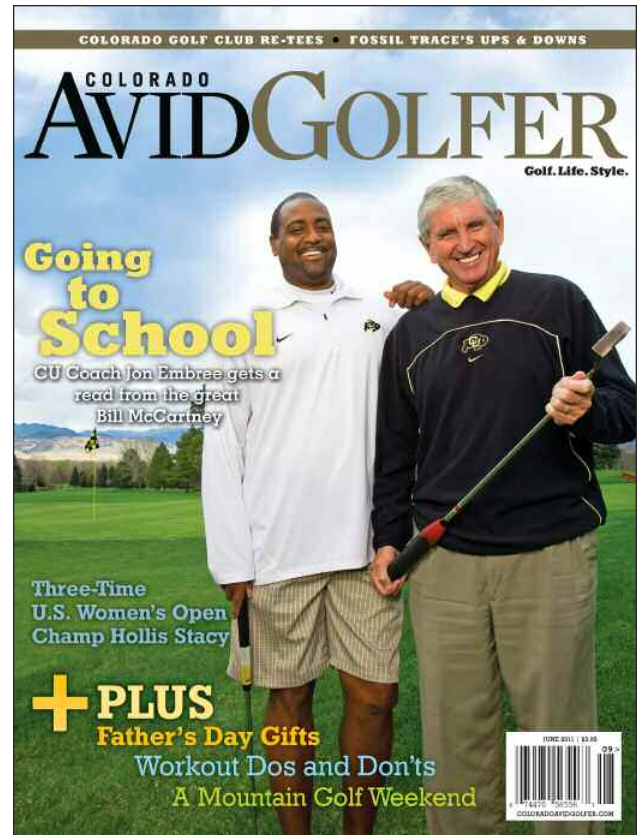


to ever play the game, including John Mackey Award winners Daniel Graham at Colorado and Mercedes Lewis at UCLA as well as CU's Christian Fauria, a 12-year professional, and perennial All-Pro Tony Gonzalez while with the Chiefs.

He was born October 15, 1965 in Los Angeles, and graduated in 1983 from Cherry Creek High School in Englewood (Colo.), where he lettered three times in football for legendary Colorado prep coach Fred Tesone. He also lettered three times in basketball (hitting a winning shot over Poudre in a state playoff game as a senior) and four times in track. He selected Colorado as his college of choice in the end over Ohio State, UCLA and Southern Cal.

Embree is married to the former Natalyn Grubb, and the couple still has one child at home, daughter Hannah (15). They have raised two football-playing sons, who, in keeping with the CU family theme, selected colleges under the tutelage of two former Buff coaches. The eldest, Taylor, is a senior wide receiver at UCLA, where Neuheisel is head coach (he has 117 career receptions for 1,548 yards and two touchdowns). Connor, also a receiver, redshirted as a freshman at UNLV under head coach Bobby Hauck, who was an assistant at Colorado under Neuheisel; he has since transferred to Kansas. Jon Embree was on coaching staffs with both Neuheisel (five seasons) and Hauck (four).

And of course, as many older Coloradans will remember that his father John played two seasons (1968-69) with the Denver Broncos. He had several big plays at receiver in catching 33 passes for 519 yards and five touchdowns, including a 79-yard score.



Embree posed with his former coach, Bill McCartney, for the cover of Avid Golfer in June 2011.

