

## CU's Bohn prefers new coach by April 14

### Basketball signing period begins in less than two weeks

**By Joshua Linden**stein Camera Sports Writer  
Boulder Daily Camera

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There's no official timeline for hiring women's basketball coach Kathy McConnell-Miller's replacement at Colorado.

That doesn't mean athletic director Mike Bohn doesn't have a preference.

As the school negotiates a settlement with McConnell-Miller, who was fired after five seasons at CU, the search for a new coach began in earnest this week with the appointment of a search committee headed by former coach and current associate athletic director Ceal Barry.

"In an ideal world, it would be nice if we could name a coach prior to signing day," Bohn said Thursday.

The regular period for high school basketball players to sign national letters of intent begins April 14 and runs through May 19.

Bohn said the top priority for the school is doing its due diligence in finding the right fit for the school.

The April 14 mark, he said, is simply a target that would help give recruits who might be considering CU a chance to see who their coach would be before they have to decide to pick or not pick the Buffs.

There is potential that the point could be moot.

Colorado had 14 of a maximum-allowable 15 scholarships filled for the 2009-2010 season. Seniors Bianca Smith and Courtney Dunn are on their way out, giving the Buffs three open spots. McConnell-Miller signed three players during the November early signing window.

Barring any defections in the wake of McConnell-Miller's firing, the only other question surrounds guard Whitney Houston's status.

The junior from Memphis, Tenn., took a leave of absence midway through the season for what CU announced at the time were personal reasons. School officials have indicated that whether Houston returns next season is still undetermined.

Bohn -- who is waiting to comment on McConnell-Miller's removal until her settlement is finalized -- said Thursday that there is no profile he's looking for in a new coach as far as experience or accomplishments.

The criteria he said he provided to the search committee included "impeccable character; competitive spirit; a voracious recruiter; a great ambassador and representative of the institution; a commitment to be fundamentally-sound in managing every aspect of the program; and a commitment to an identity."

With such broad leeway in coaching credentials, one thing that might place limitation on the search is the cost of a new coach.

Salaries have boomed in the Big 12 in recent years. Three women's hoops coaches make more than \$1 million per year, and the average this season eclipsed \$600,000.

McConnell-Miller's salary of roughly \$361,000 was ninth in the league, and becoming an active participant in the escalating Big 12 coaching salaries arms race doesn't seem likely for CU. The salaries of football coach Dan Hawkins and men's basketball coach Jeff Bzdelik both rank near the bottom of the conference in their respective sports.

Bohn said CU was aware of the Big 12 marketplace, but gave no indication of how that might affect the school's search. He said the hiring model at CU, whether for a dean or faculty member or basketball coach, was the same across campus.

"We're always looking for a fit for the institution, but we're also looking for someone who has an entrepreneurial spirit and a huge upside to grow the program," Bohn said.

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APRIL 1, 2010, 10:20 AM

## Ceal Barry had better hope she doesn't lose her voice

By [TOM KENSLE](#) |  1 Comment

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That could happen beginning this weekend in San Antonio because the former Colorado women's basketball coach is sure to be popular.



[1]

Former Colorado head coach [Ceal Barry](#) [2] barks commands to her team during a game on March 8, 2005. (Ed Zurga, Associated Press file photo)

The Women's Final Four also hosts the annual Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA) convention. Dozens, if not hundreds, of its members will want to talk to Barry, a CU associate athletic director and newly named chair of the search committee charged with finding a new women's hoops coach.

"There will be a lot of interest in this job," Barry said earlier this week. "There already has been."

Colorado may consider [San Diego State](#) [3] head coach [Beth Burns](#) [4], a CU assistant from 1983-88 under Barry. Burns, who led the Aztecs to this year's NCAA Tournament Sweet Sixteen, was hired at SDSU (her second stint there) by [Mike Bohn](#) [5], who was athletic director at SDSU before coming to CU in 2005.

Via a text message, Burns told the San Diego Union-Tribune that she is "100 percent Aztec."

Barry may cross paths with representatives of the Missouri athletic department. The fellow Big 12 member also is looking for a women's coach. Two names that have surfaced for the Mizzou job are TCU head coach [Jeff Mittie](#) <sup>[6]</sup> and Illinois State head coach [Robin Pingeton](#) <sup>[7]</sup>.

Mittie, 43, guided the Lady Frogs to the NCAA Tournament for the ninth time in 10 seasons. Pingeton, 41, has led the Redbirds to three consecutive 25-win seasons and is a former Iowa State assistant.

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