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## Brown leaving CU coaching staff to join Arizona

*By Patrick Ridgell*  
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BOULDER — The University of Colorado announced Saturday that secondary coach Greg Brown is leaving the football program immediately to become co-defensive coordinator at Arizona.

Brown has already interviewed with Arizona coach Mike Stoops.

“We’ve been very fortunate to have Brownie on our staff, and we wish him and his family the best,” CU coach Dan Hawkins said in a statement.

Brown, 52, has been CU’s secondary coach since Hawkins arrived in 2006. His departure finishes his second stint as an assistant at CU. Brown also coached the Buffs’ secondary from 1991 to 1993.

Brown almost left the program last winter to take a position at South Florida, but stayed.

“I’m extremely grateful for the opportunity that Hawk gave me, especially coming out of New Orleans and post-Hurricane Katrina,” Brown said in a statement.

Brown returned to the program in 2006 after serving as a defensive assistant with the NFL’s New Orleans Saints in 2005. He has coached in the NFL for 15 years.

“I know in my heart CU is on the right track with Dan Hawkins, and I learned a lot as a member of his staff,” Brown said. “That made this a very tough decision for me, but this should be increased responsibility as a co-coordinator and to chance to call some defenses.”

Hawkins said a search for a replacement will begin immediately. He indicated shuffling assignments among his current staff was also a possibility. Four of CU’s five starters in the secondary in 2009 earned some kind of All-Big 12 Conference team mention. Cornerback Cha’pelle Brown and Jimmy Smith were named second-team all-conference. Corner Jalil Brown and safety Benjamin Burney earned honorable mention. During Brown’s first tenure at CU, he coached two Jim Thorpe Award winners, Deon Figures and Chris Hudson. Figures won the award in 1992, while Hudson won it in 1994, the year after Brown left.

Read Patrick Ridgell’s [CU sports blog](#). He can be reached at [pridgell@times-call.com](mailto:pridgell@times-call.com).

# Assistant Brown leaving CU football team for Arizona

## Hawkins may shuffle staff to replace secondary coach

**Kyle Ringo** Camera Sports Writer  
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Greg Brown said the chance to work with an old friend and his first opportunity to be a defensive coordinator led him to leave the Colorado football program for Arizona on Saturday, not the lack of job security in Boulder.

Brown, 52, has been hired as co-defensive coordinator on coach Mike Stoops' staff in Tucson after serving as secondary coach and defensive passing game coordinator under Dan Hawkins at CU for the past four years. Brown replaces Mark Stoops, who has been hired as defensive coordinator at Florida State.

"The love I have for this university ever since the 1991, 92, 93 seasons under Bill McCartney has done nothing but grow," Brown said. "My admiration for Boulder and the university and the football program, it was a tough decision to walk away from this place.

"But this was just one of those things where, boy, that was hard to say no to."

Brown passed up an opportunity last winter to leave Colorado to become co-defensive coordinator at South Florida because it wasn't the right time or place. He said when he received a call from Mike Stoops with the job offer in recent days, it was too much to pass on once again because of a long-standing friendship with Stoops.

Brown became friends with Mike Stoops and Oklahoma coach Bob Stoops in the early 1990s during his first stint as CU secondary coach when the Stoops brothers worked at Kansas State. The relationships continued and blossomed during Brown's 15 years in the NFL when he was no longer competing against the brothers. The friendship ultimately lured him to Tucson.

"I'm just thinking that getting aligned with Mike Stoops, that's a good deal for a defensive coach," Brown said.

He inherits a Wildcat defense that ranked 21st nationally in total defense at the end of the regular season, allowing only 315 yards per game. Arizona finished tied for second place in the Pac-10 this season.

Brown is expected to share defensive coordinator responsibilities with current Wildcats linebackers coach Tim Kish. Other than Stoops, Brown said he does not know any other members of the Arizona coaching staff.

The job change likely means an increase in salary of as much as \$100,000 for Brown and some security he did not have at CU. Stoops earned \$283,914 this year. Brown earned \$169,000 with the Buffs. Kish made \$174,812 this year.

Brown said he preferred not to comment on what he would be paid at Arizona, but he said the increased responsibility of being a coordinator was the biggest factor for his move. Arizona generally gives its coordinators three-year contracts. Such deals are generally not available for assistant coaches at colleges in Colorado because state law limits each institution to no more than six long-term deals and those generally go to high-level administrators and head coaches.

"That was never even a concern of mine quite frankly," Brown said of having a long-term contract.

Hawkins and his assistants faced criticism all season for the team's mediocre performance. During the final weeks of the season, Hawkins was believed to be on the brink of being fired until athletic director Mike Bohn announced he would be retained for at least one more season in 2010.

Brown said the scrutiny and uncertainty about the future at Colorado had nothing to do with his decision to leave.

"Hey, the game of football, you can't predict from one year to the next," Brown said. "How one seasons ends is by no means a prediction of how the next season is going to go."

It is unclear who will replace Brown as secondary coach in Boulder, but Hawkins said a search is underway. Hawkins did not rule out a change in assignments among current members of the staff.

That could mean Hawkins is considering asking Ashley Ambrose to coach the secondary and hiring another offensive assistant. Ambrose came to CU because of his relationship with Brown and served the past two years as a defensive technical intern. He is in the process of being hired as a full-time assistant and is expected to take over as wide receivers coach, a job Hawkins handled this season.

If Ambrose was to switch to coaching the secondary, Hawkins could hire a wide receivers coach or continue coaching the position himself next year. Brown said he is not aware what Hawkins' plan might be.

Brown's departure means the Colorado coaching staff will undergo a staff shakeup for the 19th time in the past 20 seasons and the third time in four offseasons under Hawkins.

"We've been very fortunate to have Brownie on our staff, and we wish him and his family the best," Hawkins said in a statement.

Leaving Colorado for a second time was a difficult decision for Brown, who grew up around the program watching his father, Irv, serve as an assistant football coach and head baseball coach in Boulder when he was growing up. He said during practices, scrimmages and games in Folsom Field, he often remembered times he spent in the stadium as a kid watching his father work.

"This is harder than you might think to leave here because of those ties," he said.

Brown said he will always consider Colorado home and he would have no reservations about returning to the program a third time at some point in the future. He said if he does one day find himself back in Boulder, he hopes it will be as a coordinator or even head coach.

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# CU president dispels Hawk rumors

## Benson official says Bohn never told to keep coach

**By Kyle Ringo** Camera Sports Writer  
Boulder Daily Camera

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Conspiracy theories have run wild in the two weeks since the University of Colorado announced it would retain football coach Dan Hawkins for a fifth season instead of firing him after a 3-9 year, his fourth consecutive losing season.

One of those theories holds that CU president Bruce Benson insisted Hawkins be retained because he didn't want to be paying a football coach more than \$3 million not to do his job while at the same time pleading poverty in lobbying at the state Legislature for more money for the entire CU system.

Ken McConnellogue, associate vice president for university relations, said plenty of mistaken opinions from fans and boosters have found their way to the president's office in the days since the decision.

McConnellogue said it is understandable for fans and boosters to be upset with the results on the field, and it is understandable that some might be upset with the decision itself. But he said it is frustrating that others are upset by speculation about how they believe the decision was made.

He said no mandate was handed down from Benson to the Boulder campus or the athletic department in regard to whether Hawkins should be retained or fired.

When the decision was announced on Thanksgiving Day, the official university press release referred to the decision as one athletic director Mike Bohn made. McConnellogue reaffirmed that point Friday.

"The president didn't weigh in on the decision one way or another," McConnellogue said, noting Benson was on vacation for much of the week leading up to the decision. "He got a recommendation from the athletic director and chancellor and agreed with it.

"This is not the president's decision. It's the athletic director's and it's the chancellor's decision. Now, does he want to know about it? Absolutely, just because of the high-profile nature of it. But it wasn't the president's decision."

In an interview with the Camera on the day the decision was announced, Benson called himself a "big supporter" of Hawkins and said he believes the wins will come. Benson said he is proud of the way Hawkins runs his program and the academic performance of his players.

When he announced the decision to retain Hawkins, Bohn said he was not forced to keep the coach.

He explained it this way in an interview with the Camera: "I firmly believe that the power of stability comes from continuity and I'm convinced that the commitment from our students athletes to continue to play hard for their coach, despite a lot of public criticism has been consistently demonstrated. I believe that Dan retains the potential to be the caliber of coach on and off the field that we hired him to be, and his ability to lead this program to the heights that we all expect."

Hawkins is 16-33 in four years at CU and has three years remaining on his contract, which expires Jan. 31, 2013. Many fans became frustrated with the lack of progress this season and a bevy of excuses offered by a coach who espoused a "no excuses" approach last winter, spring and summer.

Limited player development, player attrition, including the transfer of heralded running back Darrell Scott, and another year of inconsistency, penalties and plodding offense led to calls for a coaching change.

When that change didn't occur, fans became even more disenchanted, with some vowing not to continue funding the program and the athletic department until they see more accountability. It also has some wondering what effect the decision will have on recruiting this year and next.

"Nobody is satisfied with the performance of the program," McConnellogue said. "We know we need to do better."

In the days leading up to the decision to keep Hawkins, Bohn consistently said no decision would be made until after the season ended and an evaluation of the coach was completed. It was a clear change in tone from Bohn, who began the season vigorously defending his coach.

That change was a signal to some that Hawkins' days were numbered even as Hawkins continued to insist that his relationship with his boss was fine and he was not concerned about his job.

Bohn went to Hawaii with the men's basketball team during the week leading up to the Nebraska game and word leaked out from Hawaii through CU's radio partner KOA (850 AM) that Hawkins would be retained. The announcement caught many in the public and the media off guard because it was not consistent with what Bohn had been saying prior to leaving on the trip. It left the impression that something happened to force a decision and an announcement.

Bohn acknowledged part of the reason for announcing the decision prior to the Nebraska game was because the atmosphere around the program was tense and becoming a burden for the student-athletes. But the sudden change of course in making an announcement before the final game left the impression there was more to the story.

McConnellogue said he has heard those rumors and speculation from fans, including the idea that Benson not only stopped a buyout of Hawkins this year, but promised that one won't happen next year either. He said it is also totally untrue.

"We just completed this season and to be speculating about what might happen next year is crazy," he said. "The coach is the coach right now, and as is the case, he is evaluated like all of us are every year."

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