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cu football

Booster fundraising plan to get look

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

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"Explore it."

That's what University of Colorado president Bruce Benson suggested to CU chancellor Phil DiStefano and athletic director Mike Bohn on Wednesday in reference to a plan by big-time Buffs boosters to raise as much as \$50 million and gain influence into athletic department decisions.

A Sunday column by The Denver Post's Woody Paige outlined a plan designed by CU booster George Solich to help organize boosters and raise as much as \$50 million for the school's athletic department through donations of \$1 million by 50 donors. Ken McConnellogue, spokesman for Benson, said the president would like further examination of the idea.

Benson and Solich, a CU graduate and president of Greenwood Village-based Cordillera Energy

Partners, met "a couple of weeks ago" to talk about fundraising and are longtime friends, McConnellogue said. A specific fundraising plan

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was not discussed during that meeting other than "George talking about helping the athletic department and getting some guys together to do so."

At Wednesday's meeting, Bohn brought Benson and DiStefano up to date on issues and options.

"When one of the university's major donors is talking about something like this, the (university) president is going to listen, particularly when they have the relationship that they have," McConnellogue said. "Certainly we want to work with people that want to help us. . . . (But) it's not like we have a '50 for CU' program in place and away we go."

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Wednesday's meeting in Benson's Denver office did not involve Solich or any other boosters, McConnellogue said.

When asked about meeting, Bohn said it "is still premature" to discuss any plan. "We're not at that point yet."

Solich could not be reached for comment.

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