
All Things Colorado Sports — Blogs — The Denver Post

JUNE 14, 2010, 7:14 AM

Will Utes be CU's league rival after all?

By **TOM KENSLE** |  1 Comment

Don't count out Utah. Or Kansas.

When I asked Colorado athletic director Mike Bohn who the heck will become CU's chief conference rival, with a smirk — and maybe a wink — he gave a rather cryptic answer.

"I think something will happen that sorts all that out," he told me during the Friday news conference that officially made Colorado a member of the Pac-10 Conference.

The latest reports that the University of Texas may be trying to help save the Big 12 (which now has 10 members) could be great news for the Utah. As Pac-10 commissioner Larry Scott reiterated on Friday, any ultimate expansion of the Pac-10 will be like Noah's Ark, two-by-two. If the Big 12's "band of five" schools decides to pass on Pac-10 invitations, Utah may get a call. Heck, it might anyway, depending on how the cards fall. The Utes would be a logical travel partner for Colorado.

Other reports say that if Texas A&M gets an invitation to the SEC and accepts, Kansas would slide in as a replacement for the band of five.

We'll see what happens. In any case, Bohn is sure the Buffs will indeed have a ready-made conference rival.

A couple of other issues addressed by Bohn:

He would like to keep an occasional football series with Nebraska, which bolted to the Big Ten Conference on Friday. "I have not talked to Tom (Osborne, NU's A.D. and former legendary football coach)," Bohn said on Friday, "but it would be great if we could schedule some games. It wouldn't be every year. But there has been a lot of equity invested in that game."

The annual "Rocky Mountain Showdown" battle with Colorado State will not be affected, Bohn said.

And of the possible \$9 million buyout to the Big 12, Bohn wants everybody to know that it would be borrowed against future earnings from the Pac-10 (because of anticipated bigger TV deals) and would not come from taxpayer money or from the general university fund.

More from All Things Colorado Sports

- [CU's McKnight says he's '105 percent'](#) ^[1]
- [Great fun at World Cup street party](#) ^[2]
- [CU's Boyle may not use all three scholarships](#) ^[3]
- [CU's Boyle is ready for your questions](#) ^[4]
- [CU's Bohn: No contact with Pac-10](#) ^[5]

Big 12's survival chances brighter?

Beebe touting TV deal in hopes of keeping league together

By Mike DeArmond McClatchy Newspapers
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 06/13/2010 10:49:13 PM MDT

COLUMBIA, Mo. -- A source close to Big 12 Conference realignment negotiations has told The Kansas City Star that chances for the league to stay together are "significantly greater than 24 hours ago."

The same source said that a new television contract being touted by commissioner Dan Beebe could produce "significantly more" than \$17 million for each of the 10 remaining Big 12 schools. Perhaps upwards of \$20 million per school.

And, that a departure penalty of around \$20 million withheld from Colorado and Nebraska would mean \$2 million each to the remaining Big 12 members.

That, of course, is dependent on there being a Big 12 Conference beyond the 2010-11 academic year. Last week Colorado agreed to leave for the Pacific-10 Conference, and Nebraska agreed to join the Big Ten Conference. It was anticipated that Pac-10 commissioner Larry Scott would make offers over the weekend to Texas, Texas A&M, Texas Tech, Oklahoma and Oklahoma State.

But on Sunday morning, word began to filter in to media outlets all over the Big 12 -- from the Texas [Rivals.com](#) site Orangebloods to The Star -- that Beebe's efforts to halt a mass exodus from the Big 12 might be gaining at least a tenuous foothold.

A source close to the re-alignment negotiations suggested that Texas -- the key to league survival in its present form -- probably would gain concessions for "getting to play the hero."

It was concessions to Texas -- for example, in the form of uneven revenue distribution that allows schools to keep more of their money from TV appearances -- on which an unstable foundation was laid when the Southwest Conference and the Big Eight Conference merged.

"There is a price," the source said. "But the price is worth it, or it's a price we have to pay."

Sunday was a day of news confirmed and news denied in the case of Texas A&M.

Chad Moller, media relations director for Missouri, confirmed that a Big 12 official had informed Missouri late Sunday afternoon that Texas A&M had turned down an offer to join the Pac-10.

At about the same time, the [Rivals.com](#) site devoted to A&M athletics, [Aggieyell.com](#), reported the Aggies had turned down the Pac-10 and they "will be the newest member of the Southeastern Conference."

Barely had those statements been made than officials at Texas A&M denied that the Aggies had committed to the SEC or spurned the Pac-10.

Jason Cook, vice president of marketing and communications, told [Orangebloods.com](#): "Texas A&M continues to evaluate its options. At this point, all options continue to be on the table."

That, at least for one more day, seemed to leave open the option of Big 12 survival.

Still out there is the obvious specter of dissolution. If the Pac-10 can convince even three more of the Big 12 South schools to leave, then the Big 12's days are numbered.

After a one-hour special session of the Missouri Board of Curators -- most of those involved hooked up by telephone -- chancellor Brady Deaton emerged from University Hall and addressed a large media gathering shortly after 9 p.m. central

time Sunday.

No votes were taken, merely MU athletic director Mike Alden briefing the curators by telephone on the current situation.

Numerous times, Deaton referred to Missouri's commitment to helping the Big 12 remain viable.

"We continue to work in every way we can to strengthen the Big 12," Deaton said. "We'll be continuing discussions over the next few days."

Asked whether he felt more optimistic about the survival of the Big 12 than he might have a few days before, Deaton said: "We're reasonably optimistic. You'd have to be blind not to have concerns about what's happening to the Big 12.

"That's why it's important to get meaningful information, knowing where we stand."

Deaton said Missouri was maintaining daily communication with other members of the Big 12.

Speculation continues to list Missouri's possible options--beyond staying in the Big 12 -- as eventual inclusion in the Big Ten if it grows to 14 or 16, or possibly becoming of interest to the SEC. The Big East, if it loses members to other leagues, might welcome Missouri as well as Kansas, according to several speculative reports. And the Mountain West Conference, looking to move forward to gaining a BCS berth, has been reported to be looking into taking Missouri, Kansas, Kansas State and Iowa State.

Moller said he could neither confirm nor deny anything about realignment involving Missouri outside the Big 12.

Close Window

Send To Printer