

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

Utah accepts invitation to join Pac-10

By DOUG ALDEN AP Sports Writer

Posted: 06/17/2010 01:04:39 PM MDT

Updated: 06/17/2010 05:41:32 PM MDT

SALT LAKE CITY—Utah's road to the BCS just became a lot less complicated.

As the newest member of the Pac-10, the Utes will be playing for a guaranteed spot in one of college football's elite bowl games rather than hoping to sneak in with an at-large berth—as they've done twice before.

Utah officially joined the Pac-10 on Thursday, leaving the Mountain West Conference for the prestige and more lucrative opportunities of a league where things such as the Heisman Trophy, Final Four and national titles are distinct possibilities instead of long shots.

"Today is an absolutely great day to be a Ute," athletic director Chris Hill said Thursday before he was interrupted by applause during a news conference.

The Pac-10 invited Utah to join the league on

Wednesday and university President Michael Young officially signed on in front of a crowd of elated boosters a day later.

After playing one final season in the Mountain West this fall, Utah will join the Pac-10—or whatever the expanded league's name will become—in 2011. There is a guaranteed BCS spot for the Pac-10 winner, but that will mean getting through a schedule of one of college football's most prominent conferences.

"We don't have limits right now so we can take a full swing," Hill said after the news conference. "That's what's great about this opportunity for us. We can go for it."

The announcement was held at Rice-Eccles Stadium, where the Utes have enjoyed two undefeated seasons in the past six years. The Utes received invitations to the Bowl Championship Series in 2004 and 2008, but both were at-large bids.

"I don't really know if you can compare the two, but there's a lot of the same feelings and a lot of the same excitement going on right now," football coach Kyle Whittingham said.

Young noted that the Utes are 7-3 against the Pac-10 in the last 10 meetings, including wins over Arizona in 2004 and Oregon State four years later during the Utes' two unbeaten runs to the BCS.

The leap takes the Utes from the Mountain West,

Advertisement



Save \$26 a month
and lock in your price for ONE YEAR!
Switch today! 1-877-866-8603

Print Powered By FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

where national television appearances are rare, to the major markets of the Pac-10. Hill pointed out that representatives from the Rose Bowl were on hand for Thursday's announcement and they, too, received a boisterous greeting.

Utah played in the Poinsettia Bowl last year in San Diego, not so far geographically from Pasadena but a monumental distance in the world of college football.

"First and foremost, the reason this has happened is because the athletes that we've had at the University of Utah have worked so hard and done so much to put this program on the map," Whittingham said. "That really is where the lion's share of the credit goes to."

The Utes were the only unbeaten team in 2008, and they didn't get a chance to play in the BCS title game. A rout of Alabama in the Sugar Bowl bolstered Utah's claims of being worthy. The Utes ended up finishing No. 2 in the final AP poll—the school's highest finish.

Hill said Utah's departure does not necessarily end the state's biggest rivalry with BYU. Hill said he hoped to work with BYU athletic director Tom Holmoe on keeping the rivalry intact with non-conference games.

The Utes also have strong programs in men's and women's basketball, and women's gymnastics that could immediately compete in the Pac-10. In sports such as baseball and tennis, the Utes will be making a tremendous leap in

competition.

"It's awesome news. It's an unbelievable feeling in the city and around the university on a lot of levels," men's basketball coach Jim Boylen said. "It's just a bigger stage for our athletes and a bigger platform to recruit from and that's a big deal."

The Pac-10 was courting a good chunk of the Big 12 but was turned down when Texas decided to stay put. Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, Texas Tech, and Texas A&M also decided to stay in the Big 12, which will be down one school when Colorado joins the Pac-10 in either 2011 or 2012.

Pac-10 commissioner Larry Scott said Thursday that there are a number of logistics to work through, including whether the expanded Pac-10 will form divisions in football and play a conference championship game. There is also the matter of the name, which will no-longer be accurate.

Then again, the Big 12 is looking like a 10-team league at the moment and the Big Ten has been playing with 11 teams since Penn State joined the conference in the early 1990s.

"There's a few conferences out there that have some math problems right now," Scott said with a chuckle.

Advertisement

Own a new computer for just \$29.99* per week!

And improve your credit score at the same time!

Give us a call today!

1-877-294-3988

*Prices start at \$29.99 but may vary by model.



Print Powered By  **FormatDynamics™**

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

college football

MWC is done with expansion, for now; CU could move to Pac-10 a year earlier

By Natalie Meisler
The Denver Post

Posted: 06/18/2010 01:00:00 AM MDT

Updated: 06/18/2010 08:58:42 AM MDT

Nine is enough for the Mountain West Conference and a commissioner who sounded weary after all the conference changes and some bizarre scenarios of the last few weeks.

After Utah left the MWC on Thursday for the Pac-10, MWC commissioner Craig Thompson said despite receiving calls a day earlier from 10 institutions eager to replace the Utes, "We are done."

Citing other commissioners who proclaimed the end of expansion, Thompson said, "I think our endeavor in terms of expansion is over for the time being."

Utah will play one season in the MWC and start Pac-10 play in 2011, which could put pressure on Colorado to move up a season. CU is scheduled to start Pac-10 play in 2012.

Asked Thursday what it would take

Mountain West

[Blog: Utah AD deserves farewell tour .](#)

for the Buffs to start playing in the Pac-10 in 2011, CU athletic director Mike Bohn said it's being discussed with Big 12 commissioner Dan Beebe and Pac-10 boss Larry Scott.

"We're working with Commissioner Beebe and Commissioner Scott on those details," Bohn said. "It's not appropriate to get into those scenarios until all the partners are involved in the process."

Scott said Thursday there are a number of logistics to work through, including whether the expanded Pac-10 will form divisions in football and play a conference championship game.

Thompson admitted that Utah's departure could impact the MWC's television contract with Versus/CBS College Sports/The Mtn. All contracts come up for review with the loss or addition of institutions. The MWC retains a lock on the Salt Lake City market with BYU and adds

Advertisement

PROTECT YOUR HOME

FREE Home Security System!

\$850 Value!

CALL NOW and receive a **FREE** wireless remote control with **PANIC BUTTON!**

1-877-246-7519

Mon-Fri 9am - 10pm - Sat 9am-7pm - Sun 11am - 6pm EST



At no cost to you for parts and activation with only a \$99 installation fee and the purchase of alarm monitoring services. Terms & Conditions apply.

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

Idaho's market with Boise State.

Remaining a nine-school conference will solve some of the potential issues raised last week when Boise State joined for a possible 10-school league in 2011. For example, Thompson said there was a split on whether to play nine conference games or the current eight.

Thompson's teleconference followed the big announcement in Salt Lake City. Utah's news conference looked like a virtual replay of the one in Boulder last week when Colorado joined the Pac-10.

The Rose Bowl committee handed out roses, the administration spoke glowingly of academic missions, and Scott cracked a joke about ski teams.

However, praise for the current conference sounded more heartfelt. Veteran Utah athletic director Chris Hill said: "I would like to acknowledge my friends in the MWC. I have great respect for them as a conference."

Utah was a charter member of the WAC in 1962 and Mountain West in 1999.

"I don't (anticipate hard feelings)," Thompson said. "Everybody's professional. Given the similar opportunities, probably everyone else in the MWC would have taken the opportunity to go to the Pac-10."

He added that "both sides will end the

relationship on a high note."

Unlike the CU-Nebraska series, which is likely to end, Hill confirmed that the rivalry with BYU will continue as a nonleague game.

"We very much enjoyed playing in the MWC," Utah president Michael Young said. "It has been a great conference for us to grow, develop and thrive."

*Natalie Meisler: 303-954-1295 or
nmeisler@denverpost.com*

Advertisement

Identity Theft Protection

ENROLL TODAY AND GET:

30 DAY RISK-FREE* TRIAL

USE PROMO CODE:

ID

CALL NOW: **1-877-670-1746**



#1 In Identity Theft Protection*

*At the end of the 30-day free period your card will be billed automatically (\$10.00 monthly/\$110.00 annually) unless you cancel within the 30-day period. You can cancel anytime without penalty by calling 1-800-LifeLock. Offer is for new LifeLock members only.

Print Powered By  **FormatDynamics™**

CU, Utah to renew football series

Utes, which met Buffs 57 times from 1903 to 1962, accept Pac-10 bid

By Joshua Lindenstein Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 06/17/2010 11:57:01 PM MDT

Two generations of Colorado Buffalo fans have grown up without recollection of their squad's longtime football series with the Utah Utes.

Joe Romig can remember. He maybe just wishes he remembered differently.

Romig -- an All-American offensive lineman and linebacker for the Buffs who went on to become a Rhodes Scholar -- starred for the Buffs' first Big 8 championship team in 1961. That team, which finished seventh in the nation after an Orange Bowl loss to LSU, suffered its only regular season defeat to Utah, a 21-12 setback in Boulder.

"They didn't have a very good team," Romig recalled Thursday. "But we didn't take them seriously and they beat us."

The Buffs and Utes officially saw their status as conference rivals reinstated on Thursday when Utah officials accepted an invitation to join the Pac-10, six days after CU did the same.

Utah's move from the Mountain West Conference renews a football series that saw the Buffs and Utes play 57 times from 1903-1962, with CU holding a 30-24-3 edge. The two schools played in the same conference from 1910-1948 and kept the series alive for several years after CU went to the Big Seven.

Romig, who went to Lakewood High School, said he didn't recall the Buffs having any designated rivals back then but believes it will be good for CU to start playing its neighbor to the west once again.

"They've had some great teams in the last five years or so," said Romig, who lives in Boulder. The Utes' press conference Thursday to announce their move was a celebration similar to the one CU held at Folsom Field last week, with campus administrators gushing over the benefits of the new league.

Pac-10 commissioner Larry Scott confirmed that Utah will begin play in the Pac-10 in the 2011-12 school year, one year earlier than planned for CU's arrival.

CU athletic director Mike Bohn said Thursday that it remains to be seen whether Colorado will also join in 2011 instead of 2012, though it would seem to be in the best interest of both the Big 12 and Pac-10 to have CU move sooner. Nebraska has already made plans to jump to the Big Ten in 2011, which would leave the Big 12 with an odd number of schools that season if CU stayed.

"We're hopeful to resolve that shortly so we can plan and (the conferences) can plan," Bohn said. "I think all parties are motivated to resolve that one way or another."

Scott reaffirmed his league's belief in equal sharing of football television revenue, though he noted that Utah would "become a full member of the conference over a period of three years in regards to revenue sharing." Scott said Colorado, meanwhile, will start as a full member in regard to revenue sharing in 2012.

"But if they start earlier, we will have to discuss that," Scott said of the Buffs.

Scott said the addition of Utah ends the Pac-10's expansion "for now." Several other league details remain to be finalized.

Sources told the Camera in recent days that CU had been assured of membership in a southern division of the league along with Arizona, Arizona State, USC, UCLA and Utah. But Scott said the issue of divisions was yet to be worked out, along with whether to form a Pac-10 Network, whether to hold a conference championship game and what to call the new 12-team league.

"There are a few conferences out there that have math problems right now," Scott said of league names. "We're one of them."

No matter how league alignment shakes out, the Buffs are certain to be tied to the Utes as a travel partners and likely rivals. The Pac-10 already had five natural pairings among its current schools, and pairing CU and Utah keeps league scheduling for all sports as simple as possible.

Bohn said Utah's proximity to Colorado would be a benefit for the Buffs and their fans but downplayed the notion that CU wouldn't have had a natural rival without the Utes' addition to the league.

"Rivals don't necessarily have to be neighbors," Bohn said.

Even before Thursday's proceedings, Colorado and Utah were slated to renew their football series with a non-conference matchup on Sept. 22, 2012 -- the 50th anniversary of their last meeting.

That timeline will move up, however, if CU begins Pac-10 play in 2011.

Close Window

Send To Printer

Value of new Pac-10 unknown

TV will determine success of addition of Colorado, Utah

Associated Press
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 06/17/2010 11:00:37 PM MDT

SAN FRANCISCO -- Pac-10 expansion appears complete with the addition of Colorado and Utah.

The question remains whether commissioner Larry Scott achieved his goal of adding schools that provided "exponential" growth in revenues and exposure for the conference.

Scott shot big by going after Texas, Oklahoma and three other Big 12 schools that eventually turned him down. The conference settled for expanding into the Mountain time zone, but couldn't crack the lucrative Texas market.

The verdict on how successful Scott's plan was won't come until the conference negotiates its new television deals next year, which could include the creation of its own network to rival the Big Ten's.

"I can't say sitting here today that we will have a TV network of our own, but I can say there is significant interest in it and we are in the process of developing a business plan for it," he said Wednesday.

But it won't be nearly as lucrative without Texas, Texas A&M, Texas Tech, Oklahoma and Oklahoma State in the conference. A 16-team conference with those schools and Colorado would have expanded the Pac-10's footprint into seven states that have about 31 million television homes and 10 of the top 30 TV markets, according to the 2009-10 figures from Nielsen Co.

By only adding Colorado and Utah, the conference will see its penetration fall from 26.7 percent of the country to just 19 percent -- a loss of 9.1 million of TV homes.

"Adding the state of Texas would have added a lot of TV homes," said Neal Pilson, president of the Pilson Communications media consulting firm and a former president of CBS Sports. "But they still have close to 20 percent of the country. A conference channel is still going to be researched and examined. They could probably make it work in those markets."

Scott said the conference has explored the possibility of a network with different teams and different numbers of teams. It hired the Creative Arts Agency to help determine how much money it can make under different plans. The Pac-10 pays out the least of any of the six BCS conferences, with the latest figures showing Stanford getting less than \$7 million and Southern California receiving about \$11.5 million.

The conference should increase those figures whether it starts its own network or does a traditional media deal. Scott has said he will be more flexible with scheduling and other matters in order to garner higher payouts from TV partners.

The question now is whether the Pac-10 can get more per school with 12 universities than it would have with 10. A football championship game should provide an additional \$10 million to \$15 million in revenues. It's not yet clear how much more the addition of the 16th largest market in Denver and the 31st largest in Salt Lake City will add.

Close Window

Send To Printer

Lawmakers support Houston joining Big 12

Associated Press
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 06/17/2010 11:00:23 PM MDT

HOUSTON -- About two dozen Texas lawmakers are supporting efforts to get the University of Houston admitted to the Big 12 Conference.

State Reps. Garnet Coleman and Bill Callegari, both from the Houston area, co-wrote a letter Thursday asking Big 12 officials to consider adding the university to the conference.

"UH is the third largest university in Texas, and is on track to rank among the top research universities in this state," the letter says. "Despite UH's local and statewide prominence, the university does not belong to a strong BCS conference such as the Big 12. The Cougars, the city of Houston, and the state of Texas deserve better."

Houston is a member of Conference USA and was a member of the Southwest Conference until 1995.

Conference USA officials did not immediately respond Thursday to messages left by The Associated Press.

Big 12 officials said commissioner Dan Beebe was not available to comment. Beebe has said the league has no plans to add any teams from within its five-state area, which includes Texas.

Coleman said he is not deterred by Beebe's stance.

"I don't quit," Coleman told the Houston Chronicle. "I don't start something I'm not going to finish. If I didn't think this was a worthy endeavor, I wouldn't have started it. This is the beginning of this effort, not the end."

Earlier this week, Oklahoma State athletic director Mike Holder said he believed any new member of the Big 12 would have to bring \$15 million in value.

Mountain West done

with expansion

With Boise State onboard and Utah officially on its way west to the Pac-10, the Mountain West will compete as a nine-team league for the foreseeable future.

If the Mountain West is going to join the BCS bonanza, it will have to earn it by winning on the football field -- just the way it has in the past.

"It's similar to an analogy to a football game: It's third-and-1 and you're going to pick it up, then you fumble the ball and someone returns it 85 yards the other way for a touchdown," Mountain West commissioner Craig Thompson said Thursday. "You regroup and figure, now what do we do?"

The decision is to do nothing.

Swapping Boise State and Utah was essentially a wash. The Mountain West loses a big chunk of the Salt Lake City market with the loss of the Utes -- though there are still BYU fans and a few from Boise State mixed in -- but gains a Broncos program that has won the Fiesta Bowl twice in the past four years.

"There are wonderful institutions in the western part of the United States, but at this juncture we're just going to circle the wagons and stay with the current makeup," Thompson said.

Close Window

Send To Printer

No resolution on revenue from Big 12 exits

By [Kirk Bohls](#) and [Randy Riggs](#)

AMERICAN-STATESMAN STAFF

Updated: 12:58 a.m. Friday, June 18, 2010

Published: 9:37 p.m. Thursday, June 17, 2010

University presidents of the reconfigured Big 12 came to no resolution Thursday about distribution of the substantial revenue that could result from financial penalties against Nebraska and Colorado for leaving the conference.

Texas A&M, one of the three schools that stands to gain more money under a proposal presented by Iowa State, has not decided whether to accept a greater share, a spokesman said.

Texas has said it will decline a larger share, while Oklahoma officials have not made their position clear .

"Texas A&M continues to have conversations with the Big 12 office on many of the financial points," said A&M spokesman Jason Cook.

Baylor, Kansas, Kansas State, Iowa State and Missouri, which all were in danger of being without a home in a BCS conference if the Big 12 disbanded, had agreed to let A&M, Texas and Oklahoma have their share of that money if it would help keep the latter three schools in the league. Iowa State officials devised the plan and offered it to Big 12 commissioner Dan Beebe.

Beebe estimated Wednesday that Nebraska and Colorado each could owe about \$18 million in penalty money.

The Cornhuskers will join the Big Ten in 2011, while Colorado has accepted an invitation to join the Pacific 10, possibly as early as the same year.

Texas President William Powers Jr. reiterated Thursday morning his previous stance that his university has no interest in accepting the offer.

"We're for the normal, original formula for the distribution of Big 12 revenue," Powers said Thursday. "It's very nice of them. We want no special deal for Texas."

DeLoss Dodds, Texas' men's athletic director, confirmed UT had "absolutely not" backed off its position that it would decline penalty money.

"I know this," Dodds said. "Our position would be to keep the current distribution rules in effect and nothing more or less than that."

The presidents met by conference call for about two hours Thursday afternoon and spent most of the time discussing the payouts of penalty fees. They also discussed the possibility that Colorado could leave the Big 12 after the 2010-11 school year. No action was taken on the matter, a league spokesman said.

The presidents are not scheduled to meet again until October but could convene earlier .

The Big 12 could withhold the penalty amounts from Nebraska and Colorado from any future revenue to be distributed among league schools. However, Nebraska Chancellor Harvey Perlman, in an interview Tuesday with Lincoln radio station KLIN, said he doesn't want to go to court over the issue.

"I thought in the context, (an exit fee) would be inappropriate," Perlman said. "From what I understand

the Big 12 has done, I think it's even more inappropriate."

kbohls@statesman.com; 445-3772

rriggs@statesman.com; 445-3957

Find this article at:

[Print this page](#)

[Close](#)

<http://www.statesman.com/sports/no-resolution-on-revenue-from-big-12-exits-754668.html>





[PRINT] ESPN.com: Pac-10

[[Print without images](#)]

Thursday, June 17, 2010

How the Pac-10 will be divided

By Ted Miller
ESPN.com

How the new Pac-12 will be divided is an unresolved issue. Heck, there's even debate among athletic directors whether the new conference should play eight or nine conference games.

And you thought the newsiest June in college football history was over! No way!

Pac-10 commissioner Larry Scott said Thursday evening that no decision will be made on the divisions, the conference championship game or the number of conference games until after Pac-10 media day on July 29. Conference athletic directors meet the following day, when they can -- face-to-face -- hash out these issues with Scott, who is in no rush to resolve them.

"I really want to slow things down now," Scott said. "There's no reason to rush."

Earlier in the week, it appeared a North-South divisional split was the plan. In fact, Colorado AD Mike Bohn apparently [believes this lineup](#) -- with Colorado in the South -- was promised to him before the Buffaloes agreed to go west and leave the Big 12. Scott said, however, that no decision has been made on the divisional lineup.

"We know what [Colorado] wants," Scott said. "[The North-South split] is not part of our contract [with Colorado]."

As for a potential Pac-12 TV network, a final decision on that won't come until the spring of 2011, Scott said.

But the most interesting issue going forward is how the divisions will set up. So let's take a look at the top possibilities.

North-South split: This remains the frontrunner. (By the way, Jon Wilner does a good job of speculating [what might be going on behind the scenes here](#).)

- **North:** California, Stanford, Oregon, Oregon State, Washington, Washington State
- **South:** Arizona, Arizona State, UCLA, USC, Colorado, Utah

Positives: It makes regional sense. It maintains travel partners. Further -- and this is more important than some might think -- as divisional "brands," North and South are easy to figure out. A person in, say, Maine would immediately be able to name which Pac-12 team is in which division. Or put it this way: Name the six teams in the ACC's "Coastal" division. Understand?

Negatives: Even with a nine-game conference schedule -- which would include four non-division games -- teams from the North wouldn't get annual dates in southern California, which is important for recruiting and also is important for some alumni. Further, a home date with USC typically draws a big crowd, so missing the Trojans as an every-other-year home game is a hit. California and Stanford also probably would be irked losing annual games with their in-state rivals.

East-West split: We're splitting hairs on East-West here. Wilner calls this the "zipper" plan, which means we could call [the divisions "Slider" and "Teeth"](#).

- **East:** Washington State, USC, Stanford, Arizona, Oregon, Colorado
- **West:** Washington, UCLA, California, Arizona State, Oregon State, Utah

Positives: This plan insures an LA team is in both divisions, so that means a trip to southern California every other year plus however many times the rotation includes a trip to the team from SoCal that's in the other division. Traditional rivalry games are maintained as annual events by creating designated opponents -- Oregon-Oregon State, Cal-Stanford, USC-UCLA, etc.

Negatives: Less regional, so there would be more long trips. It's likely a person from, say, New Hampshire wouldn't immediately know which team is in which division. We might have our first Pac-12 controversy if Colorado has its heart set on a spot in the South, in a North-South split, and believes it was promised as much.

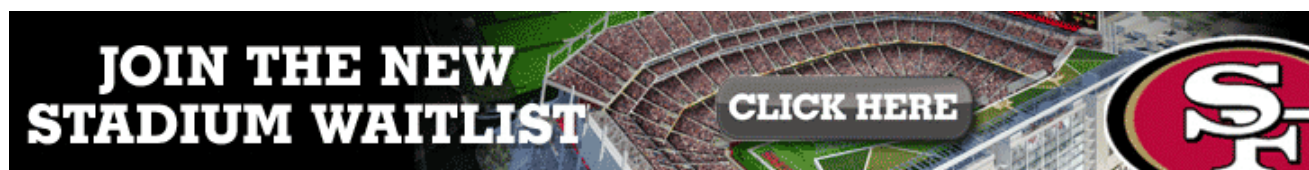
Other scenarios involve just switching around teams, such as putting Washington and USC and California, etc., in a division. Or putting Oregon and Washington together to honor that rivalry.

Yet here's a telling remark from Scott taken from Lya Wodraska's [Utah blog for the Salt Lake Tribune](#). When asked if Colorado and Utah will be travel partners, Scott said, "Absolutely, that is the DNA of the Pac-10," he said. "There were five natural travel partners and now there will be six."

That would strongly suggest that Colorado and Utah will be in the same division. If that's an "absolutely" then how would the down-the-spine plan work? The Utes and Buffaloes together would mean splitting up at least one natural rivalry. Or, more likely, going with a North-South plan.

In other words -- open up! -- there remains a contentious issue for us to chew on over the coming weeks.

ESPN.com: [Help](#) | [PR Media Kit](#) | [Sales Media Kit](#) | [Report a Bug](#) | [Corrections](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Mobile](#) | [ESPN Shop](#) | [Jobs at ESPN](#) | [Supplier Information](#)
©2009 ESPN Internet Ventures. [Terms of Use](#) and [Privacy Policy and Safety Information/Your California Privacy Rights](#) are applicable to you. All rights reserved.



PART OF THE BAY AREA NEWS GROUP

Pac-10 expansion: Updates on the division format, name change and more

Posted by Jon Wilner on June 17th, 2010 at 1:02 pm | Categorized as Colorado football, Larry Scott, Pac-10 Conference, Pac-10 expansion, Pac-10 football, Utah football

*** **3: 10 p.m. update: Please see division-alignment quote from Scott inserted below (in bold).** Thanks to the Salt Lake Trib's Lya Wodraska for passing it along.

Original post begins here:

Straight from the Utah administration/Larry Scott press conference at Rice-Eccles Stadium (I did not attend) ...

*** Scott says Pac-10 intends to announce "relatively soon" whether it will change its name, presumably to the Pac-12. (There is precedence: It switched from the Pac-8 to the Pac-10 when the Arizona schools joined.)

*** Asked about a Pac-10 TV Network, Scott said that there is "significant interest" on the part of the league presidents and that he's developing a business plan. No decision expected for months.

*** More Pac-10 expansion? Nope. "We are done," Scott said.

*** Utah will begin play in the Pac-10 in 2011-12 academic year, Scott says. And there's a possibility that Colorado could move up to a 2011 start.

*** The league has not ... **has not** ... decided how the teams will be split into two divisions, according to Scott.

"We haven't decided yet," Scott said. "There's a process we'll now go through, working closely with our athletic directors, to dig into those questions — whether to have a championship football game and whether to have divisions."

I have to assume there will be a championship football game because of the money involved: \$10-15 million per year. (Best guess: Details have not been hammered out — such as: neutral site or home field — so Scott isn't ready to make it official.)

But the lack of resolution on the division split is curious given that Colorado AD Mike Bohn told the Denver Post that the Buffs have been **assured a slot in the South Division** with Utah and the Arizona and LA schools.

(Bohn said being paired with USC and UCLA was a must for CU to join the conference, given its large alumni base in Southern California.)

So what happened? Either:

1. Bohn was misinformed or overplaying his hand, which I doubt.

2. He was misled, which I also doubt.

3. Scott figured that his vision — a North-South split with the Bay Area, Oregon and Washington schools grouped together — would be fine with everyone involved.

Except it wasn't ... and the athletic directors let Scott know about it on a conference call yesterday ... and now the league is re-evaluating ...

“I am getting all kinds of proposals,” Scott said. “I don’t think we need to look at a lot of models, and I don’t think we’ve given our members a chance to express all the considerations they have.

“This is all, especially lately — things happened quickly, in a very tight way, without a lot of consultation from a lot of people...”

As we’ve discussed on the Hotline numerous times over the past five months, the NW schools don’t want to be separated from USC and UCLA for reasons of ticket sales and recruiting exposure.

(I’m guessing the Bay Area schools feel the same way. And there are Cal-UCLA system ties to consider.)

It’s entirely possible that Scott, a conference newcomer, didn’t realize the extent of the NW (and Bay Area) objections to a North-South split ... Or he was simply so focused on the 16-team alignment that he never bothered to gauge sentiment on the 12-team format.

But those objections are why the Hotline has proposed the Zipper Plan, with the natural rivals being separated and the schedule configured in such a manner that they would play each other every year.

Anyhow, an issue of great interest to Pac-10 fans has no resolution.