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college football

## CU must iron out details, including exit cost, for move to Pac-10

By Irv Moss  
The Denver Post

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COLORADO SPRINGS — Colorado's move from the Big 12 Conference to the Pac-10 and the addition of Boise State to the Mountain West Conference upstaged talk about the upcoming football season at the city's annual college football kickoff luncheon Tuesday.

CU athletic director Mike Bohn acknowledged many details still need to be ironed out concerning the Buffs' move to the Pac-10. CU would like to join in time for the 2011 football season but currently is obligated to compete in the Big 12 for two more years.

"That issue is unresolved," Bohn said of negotiations among lawyers for both conferences, and CU, aimed at freeing up the

Buffs in 2011. "There are numerous issues. The faster we can resolve those issues, it will allow a lot of people to plan and move forward."

He hopes the issue is resolved within a month.

CU faces an approximately \$10 million buyout to leave the Big 12 after the 2011 season. It's not clear how big the penalty would be if CU left after the 2010 season, but that is part of the ongoing negotiations. The Buffs would like to follow the exit strategy of Nebraska, which is bolting the Big 12 in 2011 for the Big Ten.

The Buffs also remain uncertain whether they will play eight or nine league games in the Pac-10, which recently added Utah from the Mountain West Conference to form a 12-team league.

Bohn was filling in for football coach Dan Hawkins, who was attending his daughter's wedding.

MWC commissioner Craig Thompson said his athletic directors have discussed how Boise State would be worked into the schedule in 2011. Within a week of adding Boise State from the Western Athletic Conference earlier this month, the MWC lost Utah.

"In all likelihood, we will replace Utah with Boise State throughout the schedule," Thompson said.

CSU athletic director Paul Kowalczyk acknowledged that plan received support.

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"We also talked about just redoing the schedule from scratch," he said.

Kowalczyk said he didn't think the issue would be finalized until this fall.

Wyoming athletic director Tom Burman has a more complex problem than just putting Boise State in Utah's place on the schedule. The Cowboys play Boise State this season in what will be a nonconference game and again in 2011 in what will then be a conference game.

"If we stay with the dates we have now, I'll be looking for another nonconference game later in the 2011 season," Burman said.

The buzz among MWC representatives at the meeting was Boise State's 2011 arrival. But CSU coach Steve Fairchild said that talk will soon diminish.

"Once we start practice in a month, the whole Boise State thing will go away for a year," Fairchild said. "The only thing we're thinking about right now is our opener against CU."

Air Force coach Troy Calhoun anticipated that the main focus on Boise State's arrival would come after the 2010 season is completed.

"The reality of it is that it's still something that's down the road," Calhoun said. "It's fair to say we'll watch them a little closer this year."

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**ESPN.com:** College Football[\[Print without images\]](#)

Tuesday, June 29, 2010

## Buffaloes hope to leave after this season

Associated Press

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. -- [University of Colorado](#) athletic director Mike Bohn said he hopes to know within a month how much it's going to cost the school to bolt the Big 12 for the Pac-10.

Lawyers for both conferences and the university are in discussions on an exit strategy for CU, which announced earlier this month it was switching leagues in 2012.

The Buffaloes would prefer to leave after next season like the University of Nebraska, which is joining the Big Ten in 2011.

That could prove costlier for Colorado, but the Big 12 might also decide it's better for the Buffaloes to leave after next school year and agree to a lower penalty fee.

Big 12 bylaws require CU to forfeit half its Big 12 revenue distributions for the next two school years in order to leave the league. According to IRS tax records examined by The Associated Press, the Big 12 paid out \$10,135,802 to Colorado in 2008-09.

That would make the buyout around \$10 million, although Bohn said the cost for leaving after one year is undefined.

"There's some ambiguity in the buyout, so we're trying to figure it out," Bohn said before the annual College Football Kickoff Luncheon. "We really have a desire to come up with answers because we want to continue to fuel that interest" in joining the Pac-10.

"I do know that it is extremely complex and we recognize that the timing of the University of Colorado's departure has implications to 22 institutions," Bohn said.

Had Texas and other Big 12 schools followed CU to the Pac-10, there might not have been any buyout necessary because the Big 12 would have dissolved. But the Longhorns declined Pac-10 Commissioner Larry Scott's invitation, and so did Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, Texas A&M and Texas Tech.

The only certainty in all this complexity is that the Buffs will be playing in the Pac-10 by 2012-13. "We do know that," Bohn said. "Everything else is unresolved."

No matter the ultimate cost of leaving the Big 12, Bohn insisted the university is already reaping the rewards of switching conferences.

"We're benefiting every day with that intensity of interest in the program that helps us with recruiting, it helps us with our donor base, it helps us with the media, it helps us with our faculty," Bohn said.

He said there's been a rise in donations to the department since the announcement that the school was joining the Pac-10, but he declined to be specific.

Among the many tasks involved in the transition is redoing football schedules.

"We had some schedule models in place through 2020, but that will be altered significantly, potentially starting in '11," Bohn said.

The Buffs also are awaiting announcements on whether teams will play eight or nine league games in the Pac-10, which also lured Utah from the Mountain West Conference, making it eligible for a conference championship.

"I think that's the most frustrating thing is as we're gaining excitement associated with this move, we don't have all the details," Bohn said. "We want to continue to fuel that intensity of interest that our program desperately needs, and you can fuel it by talking about championships and models and schedules and that's the hardest thing is not being able to share that yet."

Buffaloes coach Dan Hawkins skipped the luncheon because he was at his daughter's wedding.

Hawkins is on the hot seat, having posted four non-winning seasons in Boulder, where his decision to recruit his son, Cody, to play quarterback has backfired.

"I have a lot of confidence in Dan," Bohn said. "He's done everything we've asked him to do off the field and he recognizes in Year 5, as we all do, that the expectations are high for the scoreboard this fall."

The Buffs are celebrating the 20th anniversary of their 1990 football championship this fall and will recognize Alfred Williams, a member of that team who was elected into the college football hall of fame this spring.

"It's a big year for Dan. We all know that," Bohn said. "But it's an opportunity for us to say goodbye to the Big 12 Conference potentially ... but also use that to enhance future recruiting possibilities and future growth of the program."

The Big 12 exit isn't the only buyout on Bohn's plate. He said he's still awaiting the \$500,000 that former basketball coach Jeff Bzdelik owes the university for breaking his contract to take over at Wake Forest.

"We're working through that and I don't anticipate any problems," Bohn said. "It's just kind of taken a back burner with all these other issues. But we remain very respectful and appreciative of what Jeff did for us."

NOTES: Among the attendees was MWC commissioner Craig Thompson, whose rescheduling task was made easier when Utah left the league for the Pac-10. Now, Boise State, which left the Western Athletic Conference for the MWC, will more than likely just take Utah's place on the league schedule. ... With the Utes' departure, Thompson is thrilled to have Boise State, 26-1 over the last two years, as the MWC enters the third year of a four-year cycle to gain an automatic bid in the BCS.

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Longmont, Colorado  
Thursday, July 15, 2010

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## CU waits on exit strategy

*By Arnie Stapleton  
The Associated Press*

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University of Colorado athletic director Mike Bohn is still waiting to find out what it will cost the Buffs to leave the Big 12 and join the Pac-10. **Richard M. Hackett/Times-Call**

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AP Sports Writer Pat Graham contributed to this report.



LJWorld.com

# Colorado looks for Big 12 exit strategy

## Buffaloes hoping to start play in Pac-10 by 2011



Folsom Field, home of the Colorado Buffaloes. [Enlarge photo](#)

Arnie Stapleton - Associated Press Sports Writer

June 30, 2010

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