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Big 12 commish wants some answers

By **TOM KENSLER** |  8 Comments

It sounds like Big 12 commissioner Dan Beebe wants some answers from Missouri, Nebraska and possibly Colorado during the June 1-4 conference meetings in Kansas City.

During an interview this week with Kansas City radio station WHB, Beebe was asked about reports that Missouri and Nebraska may already have been invited to join the Big Ten.

“We need to have a frank discussion in Kansas City,” Beebe said in the radio interview. “We need to talk about where we’re going and who’s on the plane when it takes off.”

It has been speculated for months that Colorado would be a top candidate for the Pac-10 if that league elects to expand.

“I will be very direct about that with our membership,” Beebe said, when asked specifically about Missouri and Nebraska. “We’ve got a lot of good things in store for us if we stick together. It would be a shame, given that all the boats have risen with this tide created by the Big 12, that they think they can have a better future somewhere else.”

The Big Ten and officials at Missouri and Nebraska were quick to deny a report by WHB that that offers to join the Big Ten already are on the table. Beebe, however, said he believes there “probably has been some contact” between the Big Ten and expansion candidates. As with coaching searches, an initial contact among intermediaries is a common practice to gauge the interest of candidates without it being made public.

Colorado athletic director Mike Bohn said this week that there have been no conversations between CU and the Pac-10 regarding conference expansion.

Beebe said in the radio interview that the Big 12 will come out stronger even if it loses multiple members. He said preparing for potential scenarios – and presumably considering possible additions to the Big 12 as replacements – is consuming much of his time.

“There would be plenty of candidates,” Beebe said.

Beebe added that, like the Big Ten, the Big 12 would look to new markets if it loses members and must find replacements.

Beebe would not name schools that would be considered, but his comment about new markets might bring schools such as Boise State and Memphis into play.

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