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## CU athletic director Bohn always positive, even in rough times like the present

By Tom Kensler  
The Denver Post

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Mike Bohn has a 2-6 football team and rebuilding basketball teams. "Are we headed in the right direction? Yes. Are we heading there as fast as we'd like? No," CU's AD says. (Cliff Grassmick, Boulder Daily Camera )

BOULDER — Mike Bohn understands that athletic directors are often graded by the success of their high-profile coaching hires. He knows that a segment of Colorado fans would like nothing better than to dump him out on the street, along with football coach Dan Hawkins, Bohn's most prominent hire.

Bohn can't be concerned with all that. He's too busy raising money and trying to attract new fans, as well as keep current fans from abandoning ship.

"Are we headed in the right direction? Yes. Are we heading there as fast as we'd like? No. But collectively, it will happen a lot faster than maybe some of our critics would believe," Bohn said.

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CU's football team is 2-6. The men's and women's basketball teams are picked to finish last or next-to-last in the Big 12. But Bohn, who ends conversations with "Go Buffs," is an eternal optimist who remains bullish on his program. And his coaching hires.

That includes Hawkins, who is 15-30 in his fourth season.

"We have unequivocal confidence and respect for Dan's work ethic, for the way he conducts his program, for his fit with CU, for his affection in wanting to be at CU for the long term," Bohn said in a recent interview. "His commitment is important to us."

He added that he likes everything about what Hawkins is doing "in all areas except one . . . the win-loss column."

Last week, Hawkins used the forum of his weekly media luncheon to say that he "will be here for a long time." Bohn declined to commit to Hawkins' longevity as CU coach.

As for CU's struggle to be competitive in revenue sports, such as football and men's and women's basketball, Bohn said, "We clearly recognize that we're falling short in our longer goals in terms of competitiveness on the scoreboard."

The combined records of the 2008 and 2009 football teams and last season's men's and women's basketball teams is 27-53, including 7-37 in Big 12 games.

"That's got to be tearing Mike up," said John Rohde, sports columnist of Oklahoma City's Daily Oklahoman and a multisport teammate of Bohn's at Boulder High School. "He inherited a lot of problems at Colorado, but after a while it becomes associated with him."

"The thing is, when you talk to Mike, he seems just as high-spirited as ever. I don't know how he pulls it off, but that's Bohn. That's the way he was at Boulder High. That's why he was hired at Colorado. That's who he is."

## Chancellor backs Bohn

Bohn said his expectation for every intercollegiate sport at Colorado is for it to become a permanent fixture in the top half of the Big 12. In the most recent reporting for the NCAA's financial reports database, the academic year that ended in June 2008, the revenues for Colorado's athletic department (\$52.63 million) ranked seventh in the Big 12.

For that period, Colorado topped Missouri (\$49.11 million), Kansas State (\$48.16 million), Baylor (\$44.15 million), Texas Tech (\$42.84 million) and Iowa State (\$38.64 million). But the six schools ahead of CU each brought in at minimum \$74.7 million in revenues, topped by Texas (\$120.29 million).

"We're not there yet," Bohn said. "But with our fans' support and the new facilities we have put together, it will certainly help us get there. I believe with all my heart that we have the ability to reach the high goals and expectations that we

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all have."

Colorado chancellor Phil DiStefano, who, as interim chancellor, hired Bohn, 48, from San Diego State in April 2005, said Hawkins and Bohn both "need more time to be successful" and does not foresee making any changes in the athletic director's seat or the head football coaching position in the near future.

"I like winning as much as anyone," said DiStefano, who came to CU from Ohio State in 1974. "I think it's going to take Dan, obviously, a little more time than what we thought."

DiStefano said he asked Bohn to find ways in which the athletic department could be better integrated into the rest of the campus.

"Mike has done a good job personally with that," DiStefano said. "But he also has done a good job with his coaches and his staff in working very closely with the campus, whether it's coaches working with our faculty, visiting classes . . .

"Mike is a great spokesperson for the university — not just for athletics, but for the whole university."

## Facilities get face-lift

Winning in collegiate athletics comes down to talent, and it's no secret CU football needs an upgrade. The Buffs lack playmakers, for one.

"We need somebody that can take a hitch pass, break a tackle and go 70 yards," Bohn said.

He believes upgrades in CU's facilities will help bolster recruiting efforts. Locker rooms have been rebuilt. The men's and women's basketball offices have been moved from dark cubby holes in the football stadium to an airy, completely renovated second floor of the basketball arena. The practice bubble enabled the football team to prepare with its normal routines during last week's snowstorm.

Groundbreaking is due to begin by spring break 2010 on a practice facility for men's and women's basketball and women's volleyball, Bohn said. The \$12 million facility will be adjacent to the Coors Events Center. Long-range plans call for an expansion of the Dal Ward Center, in particular the weight room. The Dal Ward Center also houses offices for the athletic department and football program, as well as study room and cafeteria facilities for student-athletes.

As for getting the best coaches, Bohn said he never wants to allow money to become an issue in personnel decisions. He would not comment when asked if Colorado could round up the nearly \$3 million that would be owed Hawkins if he makes a coaching change. But Bohn did say fans are mistaken if they believe CU cannot conduct business like other Big 12 schools.

"I don't want to be perceived as saying we inherited tough deals," he said. "The fact is, we all accepted these challenges. We embrace them fully, and we're committed to building a program that Colorado and all of our alumni can be proud of."

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"It's not happening as fast as some fans would like. But we're building it the right way and we're building it for the long term."

*Tom Kensler: 303-954-1280 or  
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## Hiring line

*Mike Bohn's major hires as athletic director*

### COLORADO (2005-present)

Women's basketball: Kathy McConnell-Miller (previous job: Tulsa head coach), fifth season, 52-71 — Lone winning season was 19-15 in 2007-08, reaching WNIT semifinals. Buffs picked to finish 11th in Big 12 this season.

Football: Dan Hawkins (previous job: Boise State head coach), fourth season, 15-30 — Buffs are 2-6 with a youthful team. CU is 2-18 on the road under Hawkins.

Men's basketball: Jeff Bzdelik (previous job: Air Force head coach), third season, 21-42 — Attrition and freshmen-dominated recruiting classes left Bzdelik with just one senior in his second season and one senior this season. Buffs picked to finish last in Big 12 this season.

Women's volleyball: Liz Kritza (previous job: Tulane head coach), first season, 6-15 — Kritza, a Colorado Springs native, inherited a small roster with only one senior. Her last two Tulane teams each went 28-6.

Men's golf: Roy Edwards (previous job: Kansas assistant), fourth year — Bohn took a chance on a 29-year-old assistant in 2006 and it has paid off. CU has qualified for NCAA regional play in each of Edwards' three previous seasons.

### SAN DIEGO STATE (2003-05)

Women's basketball: Beth Burns (previous job: Stanford conditioning coach), fifth season in second stint at SDSU, 57-61 — Under the former Colorado assistant (1983-88), the Aztecs have improved from 3-24 to 24-8, earning an NCAA Tournament berth last spring.

### IDAHO (1999-2003)

Football: Tom Cable (previous job: Colorado offensive coordinator), 2000-03, 11-35 — The current head coach of the Oakland Raiders, Cable posted four losing seasons at Idaho, his alma mater.

Men's basketball: Leonard Perry (previous job: Iowa State assistant), 2001-06, 48-97 — A former Vandals guard, Perry became the first African-American head coach in school history. He did not post a winning season.

Women's basketball: Mike Divilbiss (previous job: Lewis & Clark head coach), 2002-08, 82-119 — Vandals compiled a 22-7 record in 2003-04 for program's first 20-win season in 14 years, but Divilbiss went 4-25 in his last season.

*Tom Kensler, The Denver Post*

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## Ringo: Big 12 mulls changing North, South scheduling

By Kyle Ringo Camera Sports Writer  
Boulder Daily Camera

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Big 12 athletic directors will discuss possible changes to the league's current football scheduling model when they meet in New York in December and again at league meetings next spring.

One option has support from a small group of athletic directors from North Division schools, including Colorado athletic director Mike Bohn, but it hasn't been presented to the full league yet.

Under the current scheduling system, Colorado faces Texas, Texas A&M and Oklahoma State this year, completing a two-year cycle of playing those teams home and away. It won't face those opponents in the regular season again until 2012 because it begins a new two-year home-and-away cycle with Oklahoma, Baylor and Texas Tech next year.

The proposed change would be for teams never to go more than one year without facing each other in the regular season. Colorado would play Texas, Texas A&M and Oklahoma State this year and then play the other three South Division foes next season. In the third year, the Buffs would play Texas, Texas A&M and OSU again but at the opposite site from this season.

The league already has completed future schedules through the 2014 season and it's likely any changes would not take effect until 2015. However, it's possible changes could be instituted sooner if there was broad agreement for one option.

"We're hopeful that we can find some models we can build some consensus around," Bohn said.

Multiple models are expected to be discussed, with the possibility that no changes will be made. Some have proposed in the past that historic rivalries should be played every year regardless of divisions. The most notable game fitting that description in the Big 12 is the Nebraska-Oklahoma game.

Those teams will meet this weekend in Lincoln, Neb. They used to play at or near the end of the regular season every year during the heyday of the old Big Eight Conference, but the rivalry has lost some of its luster since the Big 12 formed and adopted the current scheduling method.

"I think there is no question it's changed," OU coach Bob Stoops said Monday. "It's different. You think back in the old Big Eight days and for so many years it was Oklahoma and Nebraska at the top of the league and battling at the end of the season every year. There is no denying the difference now and that it just has changed and you don't play every year and you're not in the same division."

Other 12-team leagues have different scheduling models, which keep historical rivalries in place each year between teams from opposite divisions. Some teams from opposite divisions in the Atlantic Coast Conference and the Southeastern Conference can go as long as three seasons without playing each other. Clemson from the Atlantic Division in the ACC and North Carolina from the Coastal Division have played one time in the past six seasons since the ACC expanded to 12 teams.

Bohn said he supports playing most opponents within the division later in the season, which is the case under the current Big 12 model. But he also would like to see Texas and Oklahoma have to come to Boulder occasionally in November instead of always playing those teams at the start of conference play in late September or early October.

On the tube

The Big 12 announced Colorado's Nov. 14 game at Iowa State will begin at noon and will not be televised. Here is a look at the television lineup for this week.

Central Florida at Texas, 10 a.m., FSN; Kansas at Kansas State, 10:30 a.m. Versus; Texas A&M at Colorado, 11:30 a.m., FCS; Oklahoma State at Iowa State, 1:30 p.m., ABC; Oklahoma at Nebraska, 6 p.m. ABC.

Between the hashes

Texas Tech running back Baron Batch and Oklahoma quarterback Landry Jones, were named co-offensive players of the week. Nebraska defensive tackle Jared Crick earned the defensive award and Kansas State wide receiver and kick return man Brandon Banks earned the special teams honor. ...

A total of 21 quarterbacks have started for Big 12 teams this season after only 15 last year. ...

Nebraska place-kicker Alex Henery has made 24 consecutive field goals inside 50 yards. ...

Texas A&M quarterback Jerrod Johnson leads the Big 12 in total offense and linebacker Von Miller leads the league in sacks and tackles for loss.

Who's hot?

Texas has scored nine non-offensive touchdowns this season, the most in major college football. Six of them have come in three conference games against Colorado, Missouri and Oklahoma State. By comparison, CU has one.

Who's not?

Kansas quarterback Todd Reesing has thrown one touchdown pass and three interceptions in the past two weeks against Oklahoma and Texas Tech. He was benched in the second half against the Red Raiders but will be the starter this week. Reesing threw for more than 400 yards in consecutive games last month but has thrown for 405 yards combined in the past two outings.

Heisman watch

A Daily Camera staff member has been voting in the Heisman Trophy selection process every year since the mid-1970s. I've been voting the past five seasons and this is how I see things at this point this fall. It's shaping up as one of the most difficult Heisman races in recent memory.

Tim Tebow, QB, Florida - His team is undefeated and he's still making plays on the ground and through the air even though his numbers are down from past seasons. He also plays in the best conference in the nation.

Jimmy Clausen, QB, Notre Dame - He's second in the nation in passing efficiency and an argument can be made that the Irish might be closer to .500 without him.

Case Keenum, QB, Houston - He's leading the nation in total offense and is fourth nationally in passing efficiency and he doesn't have to apologize for the schedule he's faced.

Kellen Moore, QB, Boise State - The guy is efficient and smart and does it all right, but he's not facing the same level of competition each week as the other players on this short list.

Mark Ingram, RB, Alabama - He's a solid running back in the best conference in the nation. He's having a good year for one of the best teams in the country, but I'm not convinced he even belongs in the conversation.

Others in the mix - Ryan Mathews, RB, Fresno State; Colt McCoy, QB, Texas; Jordan Shipley, WR, Texas; Dion Lewis, RB, Pittsburgh.

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area college football briefs

## CU's Kasa out for year, may get hardship scholarship

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Nick Kasa (Denver Post file photo)

BOULDER — An undisclosed illness that will keep Colorado freshman defensive end Nick Kasa off the playing field for the remainder of the season continued a string of bad luck that has befallen one of the Buffaloes' highest-profile signees.

Speaking Monday on the Big 12 coaches teleconference, CU's Dan Hawkins confirmed that

Kasa is done for the year and will petition the NCAA for a hardship ruling. If he can recover a year of eligibility, Kasa will play in 2010 as a redshirt freshman.

"It's sad for him," Hawkins said of Kasa. "He's had a couple of different issues. We'll love him up and get him through it."

A 6-foot-7, 260-pounder, Kasa was rated a national top-50 prospect last fall during his senior year at Broomfield's Legacy High School.

Kasa suffered an MCL tear in his left knee during an August drill and sat out the first three games. Surgery was not required and Kasa recovered in time to play in four games, recording a total of two tackles, including one for a loss against Texas. He did not see action Saturday in CU's loss to Missouri.

- The Buffs' game at Iowa State on Nov. 14 will kick off at noon MST. The game was not selected for television broadcast.

*Tom Kensler, The Denver Post*

### AFA's Jefferson starting to shine

AIR FORCE ACADEMY — Tim Jefferson was a little anxious when he returned to the starting lineup Saturday for Air Force's 34-16 victory over Colorado State in Fort Collins.

The sophomore quarterback looked as if he was an experienced veteran by taking the Falcons to touchdowns on their first two possessions for a

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14-0 lead.

"Sometimes I do have nerves, but I'm not going to show it," Jefferson said Monday. "I wasn't nervous about being out there and needing to prove anything.

"I was more anxious to see how my (sprained) ankle would hold up."

Jefferson had one of his better days passing, going 7-of-12 for 111 yards and two touchdowns. He was at his best near the end of the first half when he moved the Falcons into scoring range, resulting in Erik Soderberg's 50-yard field goal on the last play before halftime. And early in the second half, Jefferson's 34-yard pass to receiver Kevin Fogler converted a third down on the way to a touchdown.

*Irv Moss, The Denver Post*

## CSU sticking with Stucker

FORT COLLINS — In the frustration of the moment Saturday at Hughes Stadium after Colorado State's sixth consecutive loss, Rams coach Steve Fairchild opened up the prospect of a quarterback change.

"We've got to do something, that's for sure, because we're obviously not getting it done there," Fairchild said.

After time to reflect, Fairchild said Grant Stucker will likely retain his starting job if the fifth-year senior has a good week of practice.

"I would anticipate Grant being our starter," Fairchild said. "But again, guys have to go out and guys have to produce."

- Rams defensive coordinator Larry Kerr wasn't too optimistic about cornerback DeAngelo Wilkinson playing Saturday night at UNLV because of a foot injury.

- Fairchild said starting tight end Eric Peitz is likely done for the season because of a shoulder injury.

*Natalie Meisler, The Denver Post*

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