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## Getting to know CU football coach Jon Embree

*By Brian Howell*  
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Jon Embree was named the 24th full-time head football coach in University of Colorado history on Monday

A former CU player and assistant coach, Embree, 45, has 18 years of coaching experience — including this season as the tight ends coach with the Washington Redskins. This will be the first head coaching job for the former standout tight end.

Shortly after being introduced as head coach, Embree took a few moments to sit down with Times-Call sports editor and CU beat reporter Brian Howell to talk about his new job, his thoughts on where CU football is headed and ... meatloaf?

**Times-Call:** It's been only a few days, but how has the transition of being an NFL assistant to a college head coach gone for you?

**Jon Embree:** It's been fun. It's been pretty seamless. I'm one of those people that likes to plan things. I had an idea of what I wanted to do when I got here and I've been able to implement that so far.

**TC:** What was the hiring process like for you, as you sat back and waited for CU to complete its search?

**JE:** It was crazy because you're trying to get ready for your job with Washington. Then, you're kind of making sure you're prepared so that if you did get called to interview for this job that you're ready.

**TC:** When CU athletic director Mike Bohn first called you and offered the job, what was that moment like?

**JE:** I was excited, but I was a little disappointed because of Eric (Bieniemy, who was also a finalist for the job). You're competing against someone and you kind of know it's coming down to the two of you. (Note: Bieniemy has since agreed to join Embree's staff at CU as the offensive coordinator).

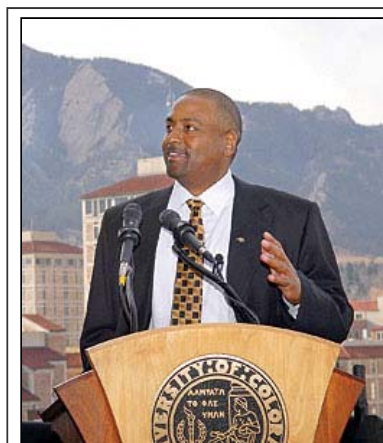
**TC:** How do your wife and kids feel about the new job?

**JE:** They're all excited because they knew this was a dream of mine.

**TC:** Did you ever think the dream would come true?

**JE:** Yeah, or I wouldn't have dreamed it.

**TC:** It has been eight years since you last coached here (as an assistant from 1993-2002). In those eight years, the program has been through quite a bit of turmoil. What did you think when you watched this program from afar?



New University of Colorado head football coach Jon Embree answers questions during a news conference Monday at Folsom Field in Boulder. **Richard M. Hackett/Times-Call**

**JE:** It's been hard because you know what the program is capable of and what the place is really like. You just hope every Saturday they go out and find a way to win and make you proud to be an alum.

**TC:** You have said that former coach Dan Hawkins (who was fired on Nov. 9) did some good things while he was here. What specifically have you seen that Dan did that will help you going forward?

**JE:** Him and Mike Bohn have done a great job of getting the players' locker room nice, the meeting rooms for us. What they've done in academics, as far as the support, is significantly better than where it was when I left.

**TC:** What is it about your coaching background that makes you feel ready for this job?

**JE:** You can learn a lot if you pay attention. You can learn a lot if you just listen. ... I know I'm prepared and I know I'm ready. I care about this place enough that if I truly believed at this point I wasn't ready, I would not have went for (the job).

**TC:** What coaches will you lean on for advice?

**JE:** I'll lean on coach Mac (former CU coach Bill McCartney). I'll lean on Mike Shanahan. I'll lean on all of them; Herm Edwards. I'm going to try to get as many of them as I can and get their opinions and try to get a consensus and get a feel for what I'm thinking.

**TC:** By the end of spring practice, when you've had a few weeks to be on the field with your team, what do you think your players will say about you?

**JE:** I don't know. At the end of the day, they'll talk about that they have the confidence now, that the message I've been preaching all spring will have sunken in. I'm not going to say what I hope to hear them say because I want to see if they're listening and getting the message.

**TC:** When you were a kid, growing up in Denver, what did you want to be when you grew up?

**JE:** A pro football player. I used to sleep with a football. I used to lay in bed at night, playing catch in the dark, trying to throw it up and see if I could catch it in the dark. Football, that's all I've ever wanted to do.

**TC:** When you've got spare time, what do you like to do?

**JE:** If it's warm, I like to go out and golf. If it's not warm, I like to hang out with the family in the house, just chill and watch some of those TV shows I haven't seen the last six months that I've got TiVo'd.

**TC:** A couple of easy ones for you. Favorite movie?

**JE:** I'd say Animal House or Caddyshack. I love comedies. That's my thing.

**TC:** Favorite meal?

**JE:** Anything my mom makes. It could be cornbread, it could be meatloaf, it could be banana bread. I like mom's cooking.

**TC:** Name some artists currently on your iPod.

**JE:** Drake, Rick Ross, Rolling Stones, Michael Jackson. I listen to everything.

**TC:** Any interesting hobbies?

**JE:** No. I don't think I'm an interesting person.

**TC:** At the end of the 2020 football season, you will be where?

**JE:** Right here, getting ready for another bowl game.

**TC:** Why should fans believe that CU can be a football power again in the near future?

**JE:** Because I think everything is lining up for us. We have a good staff that can recruit. We're going to have good quality athletes that people can be proud of. I think we match up well in the conference we're going into. Everybody (in the administration) it feels like is on the same page and going in the same direction. When you're doing it like that you're going to be successful.

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## CU's Solder on FWAA All-America Team

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University of Colorado offensive tackle Nate Solder received another honor Saturday when he was named to the Football Writers Association of America All-America Team.

The 6-foot-9 senior from Buena Vista was the tallest member of the FWAA team.

On Thursday, Solder was named to the Walter Camp All-America team. He is CU's first All-American since linebacker Jordon Dizon in 2007. He is the first Buffalo offensive tackle to garner the honor since Stan Brock was recognized in 1979.

Solder played all 847 snaps on offense this past season, grading out to 94.3 percent for the season. He allowed just one quarterback sack and three pressures, and was called for just one penalty on the year.

The Southeastern, Big Ten and Big 12 conferences accounted for 18 of the 25 players on the 67th FWAA All-America Team. Among the star-studded lineup is Bronko Nagurski Trophy winner Da'Quan Bowers of Clemson and Outland Trophy winner Gabe Carimi of Wisconsin.

The FWAA All-America Team, the second-longest continuously-published team in major college football, was announced on ABC-TV for the seventh straight season. The FWAA has named an All-America team in some form since 1944.

Auburn, LSU, Ohio State, Oklahoma State and Oregon each had two players on the team that included two repeat selections from last season: offensive guard Rodney Hudson of Florida State and linebacker Greg Jones of Michigan State. After those big three conferences, the Atlantic Coast with three players and the Pacific-10 with two were the only other leagues with multiple players on the team.

An interesting feature of the team was the committee's decision to go with three wide receivers and omitting the tight end — a move that is not unique for an FWAA team. And finally, the committee chose to go with two designated offensive backs after selecting Boise State's Kellen Moore as its quarterback. One of the offensive backs, Denard Robinson of Michigan, was as much a ball carrier as he was a thrower at his position. In the modern era (since 1967), this marks the just the second time two quarterbacks have been named to the team. In 1990, BYU's Ty Detmer and Virginia's Shawn Moore both earned All-America honors.