



Pac-10/12 Commissioner Larry Scott (right) address a June press conference in Boulder.  
Photo Courtesy: CUBuffs.com



02/03/2011 B.G. Brooks, Contributing Editor

## Brooks: 'The Commish' Drops In, Other Luncheon Morsels

**DENVER** - For the first time since a June appearance in Boulder, Pac-10/12 Commissioner **Larry Scott** paid an in-state visit on Thursday in conjunction with Colorado's annual downtown Football Preview Luncheon.

Scott accepted an invitation by CU Athletic Director **Mike Bohn** to help acknowledge what he termed "a celebration of the future . . . there was interest from the alumni base in meeting me and looking forward to the new beginning of the Pac-12. I was thrilled to have the opportunity to come back and show our conference's support for Colorado coming in."

Before Scott was introduced at the luncheon, which drew upwards of 1,200 to the Hyatt Regency Downtown Convention Center, he addressed a variety of topics with local media and CUBuffs.com:

- **Expected revenue from the Pac-12 in 2011.** The original plan was for CU to leave the Big 12 Conference for the Pac-12 in 2012. But with Utah exiting the Mountain West and beginning Pac-12 competition in 2011, all parties were in agreement that CU should do the same. Because of the expected move in 2012, CU initially was told it would receive no revenue from its new league in 2011. That's changed. "When CU reached out to us and said they would like to come early, we said we'll work and figure out as best we can - but it was always clear we couldn't tear up our TV contracts, which is our major source of revenue. So we just said we'll have to figure out what we do about it," Scott said. "The agreement that we reached is that they will get a pro-rata share of new revenue, incremental revenue by virtue of playing. They will get several million dollars next year from us because we were highly successful in negotiating our championship game deal. They will get money even though

we didn't guarantee them money . . . but it won't come anywhere close to what they're foregoing and what the buyout will be (about \$6.9 million to leave the Big 12). I think that payback will wind up being a very prudent financial move more based on the future TV deal."

- **Pocketing revenue from televised non-conference football and basketball games.** CU won't have that option, Scott said: "They'll be in our TV package next year and that's the rationale for them getting some share. But in our conference, conference games that are not televised as part of our TV package . . . they will have the right to sell. I don't know how many, but typically there might be two, three or four games that won't be on ESPN, ABC or Fox that they'll have the right to sell. So that could be an incremental revenue stream - and there could be others. We're going to keep talking about other ways we could help (CU)."
- **Playing this fall's CU-California football game as scheduled.** Negotiations between the schools are on-going, Scott said, calling playing the game "problematic in different respects." If the game, originally scheduled for Sept. 10 in Boulder, is played it would be considered non-conference. "It wouldn't make sense for one team to have more conference games than someone else," Scott said. He conceded that it would be "a little awkward . . . but if it happens, I'd just chalk it up to one of those transition issues that you have to deal with when the conference expands - kind of like the reason we had to do a one-year deal for a Pac-12 championship football game." CU's 2011 schedule shows Sept. 10's opponent to be announced.
- **The ESPN-Texas network's bearing on Pac-12 TV negotiations.** The parties recently announced a 20-year, \$300 million deal, and Scott said, "If anything, I think it will be positive in that we've stated our sincere interest in a Pac-12 network. I think the only other conference network out there is the Big Ten. I think the fact that ESPN has made the level of investment they've made in (a network with Texas) validates that there's a market . . . in that case it's a school network, not a conference. But in my view is if they can get that kind of money for a one school network with the kind of programming they're going to have on it, it bodes extremely well for what we're going to do, what kind of premium product we're going to have as a 12-team conference." The Pac-12's TV negotiations will get underway later this month and will be "a pretty extensive and intensive process that I expect to last several months," Scott said, adding that an outcome before this summer is unlikely. Who in the TV world is interested? "I would just say that there's a lot interest, a lot of national interest in the Pac-12, in some of the changes we've made, what we want to do. The cable TV business is very robust right now." Scott said the Big Ten network offers a model to be analyzed by the Pac-12: "We're very fortunate that (it) exists so that you could study what they've done well, if they were going to do it again, what they would do differently. They were the first; I'm sure compromises were made along the way. We've got the benefit of their experience." He also said the business aspects of a possible Pac-12 network "have to make sense" and called being in control of your own network "very attractive." Most professional leagues have their own networks and website operations, noted Scott. A huge bonus for the Pac-12 would be in exposure for the conference's Olympic sports: "Our schools are prolific in terms of the Olympic sports' success . . . it's a way to promote and distinguish what's unique about this conference," Scott said.
- **The use of charter flights for Pac-12 basketball travel.** Currently, Pac-10 schools rarely, if ever, travel via charter in basketball. CU's men's and women's teams do it routinely, and there has been some concern about travel in the 2011-12 season. Scott said the Pac-10 does not have a policy prohibiting the use of charters and that "going forward, we're looking at everything with a fresh set of eyes." But the future use of charters likely hinges on the Pac-12's game days; the Pac-10 men now play on Thursday-Saturday, the women play on Friday-Sunday. The exceptions are in-state rival games (UCLA-USC, Washington-Washington State, etc.). Game days in hoops will be addressed in the new league's TV negotiations, and Scott said, "My view is we've limited our national exposure and our revenue by only playing two nights. We're going to look at the issue afresh. We're certainly going to consider playing on different nights - not just Thursday and Saturday. However, if we do that there's a very high premium in our conference on minimizing missed class time. If we move off of the Thursday-Saturday (schedule), by definition we're going to move into charters for basketball so teams can get there and back and not miss anymore class." He also said the concept of "travel partners" - CU likely would be paired with Utah - "works really well . . . we won't come off it just to come off it."
- **The possibility of expanding beyond 12 schools.** The Pac-12 has achieved its comfort zone, or as Scott put it, "Twelve seems to be the magic number . . . the logical step." In part, that's because NCAA rules state a league needs 12 members to hold a championship football game, and creating divisions is simpler with a dozen teams. "Having said that . . . I don't think we've seen the end of expansion discussions," Scott added. "There was a lot of traction around the idea of a super-conference - 16 teams." He said that coming from the "pro sports world (tennis)," he found college sports "very fragmented . . . everything I know about sports and the commercial side of sports suggests that there would be more value for everyone if there was further consolidation. I think we will see a day when we go to 16-team conferences. But I don't think it's going to happen anytime soon." Still, he added that anything the Pac-12 does structurally will include the "flexibility" that would allow for future expansion.
- **Pac-12 ends, odds.** Could cross-scheduling of fall sports - i.e., football, cross country, volleyball - at one site

on the same weekend be considered in the Pac-12? Scott called the concept "interesting . . . I think (now) it happens more by happenstance, but it's a neat idea." . . . The CU men's and women's teams have several doubleheaders this season. Could that idea be explored for men's and women's same-opponent games in the Pac-12? Scott also termed that proposal "interesting." . . . With the addition of two new members, Scott said the Pac-10 isn't likely to increase its bowl tie-ins beyond the current six: "Pretty much all bowl deals are done; everyone did four-year agreements."

- **Luncheon morsels:** Heisman Trophy winner **Rashaan Salaam** made his first public appearance at a CU-related event since winning the award in 1994. Salaam said with the hiring of Head Coach **Jon Embree** and Offensive Coordinator **Eric Bieniemy**, "I had to come out." He elicited laughs reading his letter of application to La Jolla Country Day School, where he played eight-man football . . . Former Buffs Coach **Bill McCartney** predicted "an extraordinary season is about to unfold" for two reasons: CU's move to the Pac-12 and the hiring of Embree and the staff he's assembled. "Mac" said Embree's staff "matches up with any" assembled during the McCartney Era . . . After McCartney concluded an impassioned address, Embree followed and said, "Now you see why USC, UCLA and Ohio State didn't get me." Embree, a Cherry Creek tight end, was recruited by all three super-powers . . . Former Buffs quarterback **Darian Hagan** was CU's running backs coach for the past four seasons. Embree retained him, but in the role of recruiting coordinator. But, noted Embree, Hagan "will be back on the field soon." . . . Among the CU traditions Embree will go about restoring is the "big-game bricks" featured in a lower-level hallway that leads to the dressing room in the Dal Ward Athletics Center. The "big-game bricks" formerly featured the date and score of a CU win against ranked opponents, or a the date and score of a game that was significant for another reason. Embree said the tradition begins anew with Hawaii - the debut of the Embree Era (Sept. 3, Honolulu) . . . Embree had hopes of adding another local signee on Thursday to his first recruiting class. But when that didn't happen, he adjusted the total of "flipped" recruits - those who initially committed to another school but signed with CU - from eight to seven. Three of those recruits previously committed to fellow-Pac-12 member Washington. Said Embree: "I think Washington is going to be our new rival." . . . Embree paid tribute to in-state signees **Marc Mustoe** (offensive lineman, Arvada West) and **Brady Daigh** (linebacker, Mullen) for staying at home to play . . . Overall, Embree said his first recruiting class "improves our speed, athleticism and toughness." . . . Just over \$75,000 was raised at for the athletic department at this year's luncheon. The attendance almost tripled that of last year.

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## Bufs, Pac-12 reach deal

### CU to receive some funding in inaugural year

**By Kyle Ringo** Camera Sports Writer  
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 02/04/2011 12:02:04 AM MST

DENVER -- Pac-10 commissioner Larry Scott said the University of Colorado won't be completely shut out of conference revenue distributions during its first year in the Pac-12, but it won't receive anything close to the \$9.5 million it has averaged in recent years with the Big 12.

In his first visit to Colorado since June, Scott met with reporters prior to the annual recruiting luncheon in Denver on Thursday and discussed a variety of issues including the start of negotiations on the league's future media rights deal, starting a Pac-12 television network, travel issues in basketball and the status of the Colorado-Cal game next September in Boulder.

Scott said the conference and Colorado have reached an agreement under which CU will receive a pro-rated share of any new revenue the league generates outside of its current television agreement, which will expire at the end of the 2011-12 school year.

The conference already has secured new revenue that meets that standard in a \$25 million television agreement with Fox for the rights to the first Pac-12 football championship games and other games played throughout the year by Colorado and Utah that don't fall under the league's current television deal.

"They will get several million dollars next year from us because we were highly successful in negotiating our championship deal, even though we didn't guarantee them any money next year," Scott said. "But it won't come anywhere close to what they're foregoing and what the (Big 12) buyout will be.

"I think that payback will come and will wind up being a very prudent financial move more based on our future TV deal."

Scott would not say which networks have expressed interest in the future Pac-12 media rights or how many might be involved in bidding for the rights, but he said "there is a lot of interest."

He said the recent move by the University of Texas to start its own network in cooperation with ESPN was another positive sign that the Pac-12 should be in a strong position to negotiate a successful television deal along with the possibility of starting its own network.

"I think the fact that ESPN has made the level of investment they have made in it validates that there is a market and validates the concept," Scott said. "In that case, it's a school network. We're a conference. But my view is if they can get that kind of money for a one-school network with the kind of programming they're going to have on it, it bodes extremely well for what we're going to do with the kind of premium product we're going to have as a 12-team conference."

Scott said negotiations are scheduled to begin later this month and will continue well into the spring. He said he doubts there will be any kind of deal struck before the summer. The league has its spring meetings scheduled for June 3-5 in Seattle, which could be an opportunity for the league's chancellors and presidents to approve a deal. But it's also possible that negotiations could continue deeper into the summer and maybe even the fall.

Another area in which Scott believes the conference could be able to increase its television revenue is in more flexibility with its basketball scheduling.

Scott said the league uses a "logical and efficient" model now in which schools are paired as travel partners and league men's games are played on Thursdays and Saturdays and women's games are played on Fridays and Sundays.

Colorado would be paired with Utah in the future. If the Colorado men's team is at Washington on a Thursday, the Utah men's team would be at Washington State. The teams would switch sites for the Saturday game. Meanwhile the same four schools are playing women's basketball on Fridays and Sundays only those games would take place in Boulder and Salt

Lake City.

The downside to the arrangement is more missed class time for student athletes who often miss Thursday and Friday classes during weeks their teams are on the road. Scott said there is no conference rule against teams using charter flights but schools have found it isn't necessary.

### **Bears in Boulder?**

Scott is not involved in specific negotiations between Colorado and Cal over whether to play the return game of a home-and-home series in football in Boulder in September, but he has approved the idea of the teams playing a nonconference game even though they will be competing in the same conference.

Colorado traveled to Berkeley last season and the Bears are scheduled to come to Boulder on Sept. 10 this year. When the Buffs joined the Pac-10 last summer, most believed the game would be canceled as many other CU contracts for games with other league members such as Oregon, Washington and Utah were. But sources have said Cal officials have insisted on playing the game.

It is not an ideal situation for CU because it makes an already difficult schedule that much more challenging in coach Jon Embree's first season, but the school has been willing to keep the game on the schedule to accommodate Cal.

Colorado is playing in Hawaii next year allowing it to play 13 games, or not. It could simply opt not to play the Cal game, but that would leave it with only four home games and it would cause a problem for a future conference partner.

Cal is not interested in canceling the road trip and adding a seventh home game to its schedule because it is renovating Memorial Stadium and will play all of its home games at AT&T Park in San Francisco next fall.

"I would just chalk it up, if it happens, to one of those transition issues that you have to deal with when a conference expands kind of like the reason we had to do a one-year deal for a Pac-12 championship football game," Scott said.

Expect an announcement on whether the schools will play or not in the next week or 10 days.

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## Not just another brick in the wall for Jon Embree, CU Buffs

Coach uses Hawaii game as motivation for restoring tradition

By **Kyle Ringo** Camera Sports Writer  
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 02/03/2011 05:40:41 PM MST



*Click on any photo to see full gallery*

DENVER -- Colorado coach Jon Embree continued to discuss the importance of restoring traditions lost under former coach Dan Hawkins on Thursday during the program's annual recruiting luncheon.

Embree informed the crowd of more than 1,200 fans and boosters at a downtown Denver hotel of a challenge he issued to his team the first time he met with players back in early December.

He asked them to beat Hawaii in the season opener on the road next season and offered a piece of history as a reward if they come through.

The victory would end the program's 17-game road losing streak that dates back to October 27, 2007, but that isn't the historic carrot dangling in front of current players.

On a wall in the hallway just outside the Buffs locker room, there used to be about 40 cinder blocks painted gold with black

writing displaying dates and scores of big wins in the program's history. The tradition of painting those bricks was started by former coach Bill McCartney in the 1980s.

Hawkins painted over those bricks as he did so many other traditions held near and dear to the hearts of former players in an effort to put his stamp on the program. Embree is acutely aware of how annoyed former players were by the move when they visited the Dal Ward Center in recent years and has promised to bring back the wall of big wins.

But he won't do so until the current Buffs provide a big win to be added to the wall first before the other victories are restored to their rightful place.

Embree has identified the Hawaii game as the target and he encouraged former players in the audience Thursday to remind current players of the challenge whenever possible in the coming weeks and months leading up to the Sept. 3 game in Honolulu.

"There have been a lot of great traditions around here that got swept under the rug and they're coming back," Embree said. "We're going to start with one of the things that means a lot to a lot of the former players in here.

"... As a former player, you like to go back in that building and see how many bricks you put in that wall. You had pride in that. So here is what I told the team, former players. You want those bricks back up? We have to earn one."

Embree said if the Buffs win at Hawaii the bricks will be restored in time for players to see them on the wall at the first home game of the year the following week, tentatively scheduled to be against California.

"... When we win a brick, all your bricks come back," Embree said. "So when you see the players, you remind them to get that brick on the wall."

#### **Schedule tweak?**

Speaking of the Hawaii game. CU is in discussions with ESPN and Hawaii about the possibility of moving the game up several days to Thursday night Sept. 1 and making Embree's debut the first, or one of the first, college football games of the season in front of a national television audience.

CU officials aren't discussing the move yet because it is only a possibility at this point.

#### **Scott brings gift**

Pac-10 commissioner Larry Scott returned to Colorado for the first time since a June press conference at Folsom Field to announce the Buffs were joining the league. Scott spoke briefly at the luncheon and brought Embree a gift -- a Pac-10 baseball cap.

#### **Salaam returns**

Colorado's only Heisman Trophy winner returned to a school sponsored event for the first time in nearly a decade.

Rashaan Salaam addressed the crowd and shared a bit of personal history. Salaam read aloud a letter he wrote as part of the application process to get into a private high school in the San Diego area about 20 years ago.

At one point in the letter, he predicted if given the opportunity, he would go on to college and "probably win the Heisman Trophy." ...

CU officials said 67 people paid \$250 each to have their photos taken with Salaam and the Heisman outside the ballroom where the luncheon took place. More than \$75,000 was donated to the athletic department by the end of the luncheon.

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cu football briefs

## Embree era creating buzz with faithful Buffs supporters

Posted: 02/04/2011 01:00:00 AM MST

Judging from the turnout Thursday for the annual Colorado recruiting review luncheon, the buzz is back with CU football.

An estimated 1,200 boosters and supporters packed a spacious Hyatt Regency ballroom to hear a slew of speakers including first-year coach Jon Embree, new offensive coordinator Eric Bieniemy, legendary Buffs coach Bill McCartney, 1994 Heisman Trophy winner Rashaan Salaam and Larry Scott, commissioner of CU's future home, the Pac-12 Conference.

Last year, an estimated 475 listened to then CU coach Dan Hawkins talk about what would become his final recruiting class.

"It hard to contain the joy I felt when I got here today," said McCartney, who pushed for Embree and Bieniemy to return to their alma mater.

"There's something in the air. There's energy,"

McCartney added. "That's going to springboard this program."

Salaam, CU's only Heisman Trophy winner, returned to Denver for the first time in almost a decade. He lives in San Diego.

"With everybody fired up about all these former Buffs (on the coaching staff), it's going to be different for the alumni," Salaam said. "I plan on being back."

### CU and Pac-12 "great fit."

During a roundtable chat with media members prior to the luncheon, Scott dismissed the notion carried by some along the West Coast that the Pac-10 had "settled" for CU and Utah (after the withdraw of Texas, Oklahoma and others) and that the Buffs and Utes will not bring much to the league.

"(The conference) certainly doesn't see it that way," Scott said. "It's a great fit."

### Spring game under the lights.

Embree was instrumental in scheduling CU's April 9 spring game for an evening kickoff (6 p.m.), a first for the school. "It will add excitement and make it an event," he said.

### Footnotes.

One of the big attractions of this event is a video that shows highlights of the new signees. Embree signed a class of 19 on Wednesday. "This

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group will add speed and athleticism," Embree said. . . . CU expects to have its Sept. 10 home date resolved by the end of this month, according to school spokesman David Plati. California is the scheduled opponent, but it would be awkward to play a Pac-12 team as a nonleague game. Complicating matters is the fact that both Colorado and Cal must find replacements. . . . Embree, on convincing three former Washington commitments to sign instead with CU: "Maybe U-Dub" will be our new rival."

*Tom Kensler, The Denver Post*

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## All Things Colorado Sports — Blogs — The Denver Post

FEBRUARY 4, 2011, 4:24 PM

# CU 2011 recruiting class analysis: Malcolm Creer

By **TOM KENSLE** |  No Comments**MALCOLM CREER**, RB, 5-11, 200, Los Angeles Palisades HS

**COACH JON EMBREE SAYS:** “The more I see film on this kid the more and more I like him. He has great balance, great lower leg strength. He’s a physical runner.”

**WHAT YOU MAY NOT KNOW:** Embree said Nebraska and Washington made a big, final push for Creer on the night before signing day.

**MY TAKE:** Creer was ranked the No. 8 running back in California by Scout.com, but more impressive to me is the fact that Nebraska wanted him. Huskers don’t have many busts at running back.

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## All Things Colorado Sports — Blogs — The Denver Post

FEBRUARY 4, 2011, 3:21 PM

# CU 2011 recruiting class analysis: Jermane Clark

By **TOM KENSLE** |  No Comments

JERMANE CLARK, ATH, 6-2, 205, Oak Ridge Military Academy

COACH JON EMBREE SAYS: “He could grow into a linebacker or be a big safety. He will strike you.”

WHAT YOU MAY NOT KNOW: Has served at as children’s center volunteer for kids with special needs. Considering a major in early childhood education.

MY TAKE: Relatively unheralded as the No. 93 player in the state of North Carolina. But he has athleticism, and his versatility should be a welcome addition to the roster.

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- [CU 2011 recruiting class analysis: Paulay Asiata](#) <sup>[1]</sup>
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## All Things Colorado Sports — Blogs — The Denver Post

FEBRUARY 4, 2011, 2:20 PM

# CU 2011 recruiting class analysis: Paulay Asiata

By **TOM KENSLE** |  No Comments

PAULAY ASIATA, OL, 6-5, 295, Honolulu's St. Louis HS

COACH JON EMBREE SAYS: "He's very quiet like (former Buff great) Chris Naeole was, then he smiles like 'I'd like to jump across the table and choke you.' He's tough, nasty."

WHAT YOU MAY NOT KNOW: A brother, Johan, just finished rookie year as offensive lineman with Chicago Bears.

MY TAKE: Players from Hawaii almost invariable have a high motor for football because they love the sport so much. Washington wanted him. I like his chances.

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[1] CU 2011 recruiting class analysis: Jermaine Clark: [http://blogs.denverpost.com/sports/2011/02/04/cu-2011-recruiting-class-analysis-jermaine-clark/15725/?source=ARK\\_sports](http://blogs.denverpost.com/sports/2011/02/04/cu-2011-recruiting-class-analysis-jermaine-clark/15725/?source=ARK_sports)

[2] CU 2011 recruiting class analysis: Malcolm Creer: [http://blogs.denverpost.com/sports/2011/02/04/cu-2011-recruiting-class-analysis-malcolm-creer/15728/?source=ARK\\_sports](http://blogs.denverpost.com/sports/2011/02/04/cu-2011-recruiting-class-analysis-malcolm-creer/15728/?source=ARK_sports)

[3] CU 2011 recruiting class analysis: Brady Daigh: [http://blogs.denverpost.com/sports/2011/02/07/cu-2011-recruiting-class-analysis-brady-daigh/15730/?source=ARK\\_sports](http://blogs.denverpost.com/sports/2011/02/07/cu-2011-recruiting-class-analysis-brady-daigh/15730/?source=ARK_sports)

[4] Excitement building for Carmelo Anthony vs LeBron James | All Things Nuggets — Denver Nuggets news, stats, analysis | The Denver Post : [http://blogs.denverpost.com/nuggets/2010/02/15/getting-excited-about-melo-vs-lebron/703/?source=ARK\\_sports](http://blogs.denverpost.com/nuggets/2010/02/15/getting-excited-about-melo-vs-lebron/703/?source=ARK_sports)

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