

## Big 12's Dan Beebe: 'Makes the most sense' for CU Buffs to join Pac-10 in 2011

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

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IRVING, Texas – Big 12 Conference commissioner Dan Beebe said “it makes the most sense” for the University of Colorado to leave the Big 12 for the Pac-10 in 2011 instead of the 2012, and he believes that is likely to happen.

Talking with a handful of reporters in the back of the main interview room at Big 12 football media days one day before he is scheduled to give his state of the conference update, Beebe said he is optimistic the details of Colorado's exit from the league can be finalized before the college football season begins in six weeks.

“I think all of us have that interest,” Beebe said when asked about CU leaving a year earlier than originally planned. “We just have to make sure we’ve got everything solidified in terms of all the issues. Everybody has been tremendous in terms of working together. There has been a very, very strong expression by our board and our athletics directors about ensuring that these relationships are treated well and that both institutions that are departing are treated with the utmost respect. That’s been demonstrated in what we’ve carried out so far.”

Colorado officials also have said throughout the summer they are hopeful to resolve the details in switching conferences before the coming school year begins. The main sticking point is how much money Colorado will pay or forfeit in conference distributions from the Big 12.

Some reports have speculated the figure could be as much as \$20 million. CU sources have estimated the final cost will likely be somewhere between \$9 million and \$14.5 million. Beebe was asked if the \$20 million estimate was too high.

“I’m not going to speak to any kind of consideration of the financial implications,” Beebe said. “We’re still in talks about it. That shouldn’t say anything one way or the other about that.”

Beebe will likely address the issue further Tuesday when he faces the full media horde covering three days of events here.

Beebe and his staff have been busy preparing for the final season Nebraska will be in the league. It is most likely Colorado's final season, too. Beebe said believes both teams will be treated with respect when they’re on the road in the conference this season and the conference can get through the year without much rancor.

“Yeah, I think we can,” he said. “It’s hard to get that down to some of the fan level, but I think there is going to be a large effort to do that. ...We haven’t talked about specific campaigns to do so.”

Beebe said administrators from Nebraska and Texas already are planning to get together prior to their Oct. 16 rematch of last year’s conference title game. The commissioner also plans to be at that game in Lincoln, Neb.

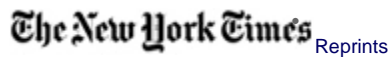
Beebe said the 10 remaining members of the conference have come together well in the aftermath of the conference realignment hubbub earlier this summer that nearly killed the Big 12.

“We came out as strong as I’ve ever observed this league in terms of the collegiality and the interest and the understanding that everybody needs everybody else,” Beebe said. “I’ve never seen such cohesion with this group of institutions.

“...It’s kind of like a family spat and then you come back stronger and more appreciative of each other.”

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## Pac-10 Is Making Plans to Raise Profile and Income

By **KEN BELSON**

When college sports fans think of the Pacific-10 Conference, John Wooden at [U.C.L.A.](#), [O. J. Simpson](#) at Southern California, [John Elway](#) at Stanford and Steve Prefontaine at Oregon are just a few of the legends who come to mind.

But fans outside the West Coast watched them play and coach on television only sporadically because games in the Pacific time zone often start past prime time in other parts of the country. That has put the Pac-10 at a disadvantage when negotiating broadcast and sponsorship deals, at least compared with other large conferences like the Southeastern and the Big Ten.

Larry Scott, the commissioner of the [Pac-10](#), is trying to change that. On Tuesday, he will unveil a wide-ranging effort to raise the conference's profile outside the western United States. The marketing blitz will include for the first time interviews on the East Coast with conference coaches, which begin this week, and new logos, television commercials and billboard advertisements promoting the Pac-10 in Times Square and elsewhere.

The branding campaign comes a year before the Pac-10's television contracts expire. It also follows months of jockeying by the largest conferences to add teams with the aim of increasing their leverage in negotiations. The Pac-10, for instance, will add [Utah and Colorado](#).

Scott and other Pac-10 officials say they hope that by increasing their nationwide exposure, they will be able to secure deals in line with other major conferences and potentially start their own cable television network similar to what the Big Ten has done.

"The Pac-10 is a long way off from where other conferences are," Scott said. "Our coming to New York is indicative of our telling our story differently and signals that this isn't your grandfather's conference and we're not going to lay back and let people form their own assumptions."

By the Pac-10's reckoning, the television contracts signed by the Atlantic Coast Conference are about twice as valuable as the Pac-10's and those secured by the Big Ten and SEC are more than three times as lucrative.

A larger broadcast deal would allow schools in the Pac-10 to spend more on recruitment of athletes, athletic facilities and money-losing sports, which often means everything except football and men's basketball. Greater national exposure would also help attract students from out of state, who often pay higher tuition.

Money from broadcast contracts, merchandise sales and sponsorships with companies like Nike have become even more critical because universities have been hit by cuts in state and federal funding, alumni giving and investment income from endowments.

"We'd rather not be cutting programs," said Michael Crow, the president of [Arizona State](#), which runs a 5 percent deficit in its \$50 million athletic budget for 21 Division I programs. "We produce a lot of Olympians, and these turn out to be expensive ventures."

In past years, the Pac-10 has been reluctant to move up the start times of its games so that broadcasters could reach fans on the East Coast during prime time. To win deals similar to other big conferences', the Pac-10 plans to be more flexible this year with the scheduling of its games.

Eventually creating its own network is another possibility. It would allow the conference to generate more revenue from advertising and cable subscription fees and give the Pac-10 and advertisers a better chance to reach fans in Latin America and Asia. Sports with smaller followings like volleyball and gymnastics would also be televised more often.

"Our university has a worldwide reach, and it's another way of extending our reach," said Bob Bowlsby, the athletic director at Stanford. "You increase your exposure by bringing the product to them."