

CU Buffs' Jon Embree's class nearly full

CU football coach using most of his 2011 scholarships

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Sooner or later the average fan of the Colorado football program has to wonder where coach Jon Embree is getting all these scholarships to award late additions to the 2011 signing class.

All head football coaches at the major college level often find themselves managing a numbers game of comings and goings in the offseason.

Embree has been a little more busy than many of his peers in his first six months on the job, trying to maximize the number of quality players he has at his disposal this fall as he tries to turn around a proud program. He's also trying to avoid making a long-term commitment to a player who might have been passed over by others for good reason.

In recent weeks, Embree has extended at least three new scholarship offers to 2011 prospects in addition to several late signees previously added earlier this spring.

Embree and his assistants received signed scholarship paperwork from 19 prospects on national signing day back in February. That total along with returning players brought the program close to the 85 scholarship limit set by the NCAA for the 2011 season.

A few weeks later, Embree added a 20th member of the class in wide receiver Tyler McCulloch of Albuquerque and two months later he gave a scholarship to Georgia senior transfer wide receiver Logan Gray, who does not have to sit out a year because he already graduated from Georgia. Scholarships for five players became available this spring when offensive lineman Bryce Givens was suspended through the fall semester after an off-the-field incident. Wide receiver Will Jefferson decided to medically retire because of chronically bad knees, defensive end Forrest West opted to transfer and tight ends Henley Griffon and Harold Mobley were told they would not be welcomed back to the program after failing to meet several challenges put to them by Embree.

It's possible more scholarships could be available because of other medical retirements the school hasn't announced yet or other members of the 2011 class who have failed to qualify.

Embree recently received signed scholarship paperwork from Austin Vincent, a wide receiver from DeSoto, Texas, who was committed to Iowa before confusion about his eligibility prevented him from signing with the Hawkeyes in February.

He also has added D.D. Goodson, an athlete from Rosenberg, Texas, who could play running back, wide receiver or nickel back for the Buffs. His coach told a Texas newspaper he believed Goodson was overlooked by other major programs because he is undersized at 5-foot-7. CU offensive coordinator Eric Bieniemy wasn't worried about that and offered a scholarship.

CU has 28 seniors on the 2011 roster. The majority of them are scholarship players. In a typical year, Embree might be inclined to sit on his scholarships and save them for the 2012 class, but he already is expecting to be able to use his full allotment of 25 scholarships next February, which means he might as well sign players now if he believes they can help him this fall or down the line.

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