

# CU will be in Pac-12 South, with UCLA and Southern Cal

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

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SAN FRANCISCO -- When University of Colorado mascot Ralphie the Buffalo darts out of her pen and rumbles onto Folsom Field on fall Saturdays, leading the football team on the field, she does so heading south.

Now the entire school is following her lead.

Pac-10 commissioner Larry Scott announced significant decisions in the expansion of his league Thursday that will serve as the foundation for years to come, including divisional alignment that places Colorado and Utah in the Pac-12 South Division, a plan for equal revenue sharing beginning in 2012 and a decision to hold a conference championship game in football at the home field of the team with the best record beginning in the 2011 season.

"This is truly an historic day for the Pac-12 Conference," Scott said. "We've achieved some monumental goals in a relatively short period of time that position us very well for the future."

Scott said the conference engaged in "a thorough and rigorous process of analysis, study and debate and consensus building" in deciding what the structure of the conference would be in the future.

Scott made the announcements during a press conference at the Fairmont Hotel here following a meeting of the league's presidents and chancellors who voted unanimously on all the decisions. Colorado Chancellor Phil DiStefano represented CU.

DiStefano said the fact that Colorado will share revenues equally with its conference rivals in the future is an "extremely significant" development for the school and the athletic department. DiStefano said CU has received between \$9 and \$10 million in conference distributions from the Big 12 in recent years and will begin receiving \$12-\$14 million in its new conference.

"I think that was the one key piece that obviously we would never have gotten in the Big 12, but we have here," DiStefano said. "That's going to, I think, move our program forward as we look to the future."

But Colorado must first overcome a one-year blow to its budget.

At this time, Colorado and Utah are not scheduled to receive any conference distribution from the league in the first year. Colorado begins to receive its full share in the 2012-13 school year when the league's new media rights deal kicks in. Utah will be gradually phased in and will not receive a full share of conference distributions until the 2014-15 school year.

Athletic director Mike Bohn said CU is continuing to negotiate with the Pac-12 to receive some conference money in its first year. He said the loss of conference revenue will be somewhat mitigated by CU being able to keep all of its revenue from non-conference games and television appearances. A key example is the Buffs' trip to Ohio State for which CU will earn \$1.4 million plus television revenue for a nationally televised game.

DiStefano said that Scott began the process earlier this summer with two goals, to form two competitive divisions and to agree on equal revenue sharing. It is the first time in the history of the league an equal revenue sharing policy has been adopted. In the past, revenue was divided based on a formula that had a heavy emphasis on television appearances and favored the schools in the larger markets.

Scott said equal revenue sharing begins in 2012 when the league's new media rights deal will begin. He said all of the conference's television and Internet rights will be aggregated and sold together. Radio rights and local sponsorships remain the property of individual institutions.

Scott said USC and UCLA will receive a \$2 million revenue "premium" in any year that the league's revenue falls below \$170 million. He said that decision was agreed to because the two Los Angeles area schools have traditionally made more in television revenue than their conference partners and the premium will insure those schools see the same growth in

revenue as the other schools in the league.

DiStefano said the conference believes it will hit the \$170 million mark quickly.

The Buffs will trade long-held and sometimes contentious rivalries with Nebraska, Missouri, Kansas, Kansas State and Iowa State in the Big 12 North for new battles with USC, UCLA, Arizona, Arizona State and Utah in the Pac-12 South.

That decision alone might be the most significant development for Colorado athletic programs since the football team won the national title in 1990. CU's largest alumni base outside the state is located in the Southern California and Arizona areas and the Buffs will now make regular appearances in those areas. It is also prime recruiting territory for coaches in most sports and a longtime base from which the CU football and basketball programs have drawn

"I think it's huge that we're in that southern division," DiStefano said.

He said he came to the meeting prepared for one of his peers to suggest making a change in the division alignment approved by the athletic directors, but DiStefano said the topic didn't come up in the meeting of presidents and chancellors.

DiStefano said Colorado's move to the Pac-12 and its position in the south division will significantly boost fundraising because there are 50,000 alumni in the Pac-12 footprint versus 15,000 in the Big 12 states not including Colorado.

Scott said divisions were decided using four criteria, including the importance of rivalry games, competitive balance, geography and fan friendliness.

Scott used a chart showing each current Pac-10 team's total number of conference wins in history to demonstrate the balance between the divisions. The top four teams in the north division have combined for 224 wins over the history of the Pac-10 while the four current Pac-10 members in the south division have combined for 230 wins.

Football is the only sport in which divisions will be used. Schedules, including one for the 2011 season, are still being finalized and should be available in 4-6 weeks. Scott said the Bay Area schools in the north division and the Los Angeles schools in the south will continue to play every season to preserve rivalries that date back more than 70 years.

That somewhat complicates scheduling each teams nine conference games a season. Colorado will play the five schools in the south division every year, with Utah most likely replacing Nebraska as the final regular season game of the year on rivalry weekend.

With the California schools playing each other every year regardless of division, Colorado will play the northwest schools -- Washington, Washington State, Oregon and Oregon State -- three times every four years and Cal and Stanford twice every four years.

That insures that every student-athlete will make at least one trip to every school in the conference in their career.

"I couldn't be more pleased and feel very energized about where we're going," Scott said.

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## Colorado joining USC, UCLA in Pac- 12 South

By John Henderson

The Denver Post

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SAN FRANCISCO — Colorado got its wish and will be in the South Division of the new Pac-12 when the league expands next year. Colorado and Utah join the Pac-10 to make it the Pac-12 next year.

Conference administrators voted today to also create a football championship game, establish scheduling models for all other sports and agreed upon an equal-revenue sharing plan. The host of the football championship game will be the team with the best conference record.

CU will be in the Pac-12 South along with Utah, Arizona, Arizona State, UCLA and Southern California.

"Our key objective was to transform the Pac-10 to a modern 12-team conference that has long-term strength, increased value, competitive balance and is

fan friendly and we have done that with these

monumental decisions today," commissioner Larry Scott said. "By unanimously adopting a plan for equal revenue sharing we have created a conference with a strong foundation for long term success."

While the new Pac-12 essentially will have equal revenue sharing, it will give UCLA and Southern California an extra \$2 million each until the league's new media revenues reach \$170 million.

In the North Division will be California, Oregon, Oregon State, Stanford, Washington and Washington State.

Each school will play five divisional football games, and four cross-divisional games each year. To preserve all of the historic rivalries, including those among the California schools, the new scheduling format locks in annual inter-divisional games between the Northern and Southern California teams.

The inaugural Pac-12 Championship game will be played in December 2011 at the home stadium of the team with the best overall conference record.

There will not be divisions for Pac-12 basketball or any other sports. In men's and women's basketball, the teams will play an 18-game conference schedule.



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Longmont, Colorado  
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## **Pac-12 divisions approved**

*By Josh Dubow*  
*The Associated Press*

SAN FRANCISCO — The new Pac-12 Conference approved football divisions that will split the California schools and adopted an equal revenue-sharing plan Thursday as the league presidents and chancellors hashed out the important issues that arose because of recent expansion.

Colorado and Utah recently accepted invitations to join the Pac-10 in the conference's first expansion since 1978, necessitating many changes for when the league becomes a 12-team conference.

"There was robust, spirited dialogue about all of these things," Commissioner Larry Scott said. "These are very important matters that we were dealing with. I'm just really pleased with the way everyone came together and realized we're building an enterprise that's about to scale in a way these schools have never been part of. It wasn't hard to get people to agree. The fact they agreed unanimously was a very strong statement."

The most anticipated decision was the division alignment. The league decided to split the California schools, with Stanford and Cal playing in the North Division with Oregon, Oregon State, Washington and Washington State. UCLA and Southern California will be in the South with Arizona, Arizona State, Utah and Colorado.

But the conference did vote to keep the historic California rivalries. The Bay Area schools have played the Los Angeles schools every year since 1946 in rivalries that started long before that. Cal and Stanford will each play UCLA and USC every year in football.

"It was something all four of the California schools from minute one stated as essential to us," Cal athletic director Sandy Barbour said. "We would not have been in favor of any deal or ultimate resolution that did not provide that as an opportunity."

The other cross-divisional games in the nine-game conference schedule will rotate, with the Oregon and Washington schools playing in Los Angeles every other year as opposed to the current annual trips. The Northwest schools would either play both Los Angeles schools every other year or one LA school each year.

Washington athletic director Scott Woodward said he talked with coach Steve Sarkisian about losing the annual trip to Los Angeles.

"We like being in LA, but like coach said they'll be sick of seeing him in LA in January when he's living down there recruiting his tail off," Woodward said. "What the CEOs did as a conference eclipses any small nuances."

The more important decision came in regards to revenue sharing. The conference will switch from an appearance-based model where the Los Angeles schools traditionally earned more money to an equal sharing of football television revenues when a new TV deal kicks in starting in September 2012.

USC and UCLA got some protection as both schools will get a \$2 million bonus if the conference media revenues fall below \$170 million. The conference currently generates about \$60 million a year in television revenues, but that is expected to rise significantly when a new television deal is negotiated.

The conference will also control all television and Internet rights for its schools for the first time.

“There was a lot of pushing and shoving during the course of these negotiations,” Stanford athletic director Bob Bowlsby said. “We were all trying to do what was best for the conference but also represent our individual institutions. Our perspectives weren’t always exactly the same but we worked our way through the issues.”

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## CU to play in the Pac-12 South

Bufs join Trojans, Bruins, Sun Devils in division

*By Esteban L. Hernandez on October 21, 2010*

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The Buffs are now part of the Pac-12 south division alongside regional rival Utah, the league announced Thursday in San Francisco, Calif.

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“It’s an exciting day for the Pac-12 and all of our fans,” Pac-10 Commissioner Larry Scott said in a news release.

As predicted, the two-division system will allow traditional in-state and regional rivalries to stay intact, including those of the California schools who will be split up with the two division system. Inter-division games will also be scheduled to ensure California schools continue their storied rivalries, according to the news release.

The deal was reached with votes from chancellors and presidents from each member school.

“Not only did we achieve a competitive balance in our divisions, but we were also able to preserve our traditional rivalries as cornerstones of our conference,” Scott said. “These great annual battles have produced some of the most memorable moments in sports history. It was imperative that we kept them intact.”

The split joins Arizona, Arizona State, UCLA, USC and Utah with the Buffs in the Pac-12 south, while the north division will include California, Oregon, Oregon State, Stanford, Washington and Washington State.

Scott said adopting a plan for equal revenue sharing creates a conference with a strong foundation for what he calls long-term success.

“Our key objective was to transform the Pac-10 to a modern 12-team conference that has long-term strength, increased value, competitive balance and is fan friendly and we have done that with these monumental decisions today,” Scott said.



The future logo of the Pac-12. (Courtesy graphic)

The new conference will also feature a Pac-12 Championship game, to be played in December 2011 at the school with the best overall record.

Basketball and all other athletics are left out of this split, according to the news release. Men's and women's basketball will feature an 18-game schedule home and home games against traditional rivals with six rotating home and home games. Single play games against the remaining four schools will also be scheduled.

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## New Pac-12 will be a cash cow



**Dave Curtis**



Sporting News

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Fans in the West spent Thursday dreaming up potential Pac-12 championship game showdowns and wondering who got the best deal with the league's new divisions. But, as usual, the big news from conference commissioner Larry Scott involved dollars.

[Chief executive officers](#) of the Pac-10's universities, plus leaders from incoming schools Colorado and Utah, voted Thursday in San Francisco to a near-equal distribution of conference revenues among the schools. The distribution will become completely equal once the league rakes in better than \$170 million. And Scott hinted in a press conference he



expects to hit that threshold when the conference's new television agreements kick off in 2013, two years after the league officially expands from 10 to 12 members.

"This is huge news for us," Washington athletic director Scott Woodward told Sporting News in a telephone interview. "It sets the table for us to do a blockbuster media deal. It puts us on par financially with the SEC and the Big Ten. We are truly united as a conference with great markets and balance."

Scott also gave a [clue](#) as to the composition of those anticipated blockbuster deals. The presidents and chancellors also voted Thursday to aggregate the media rights from the schools. Such a move sets up the Pac-12 to launch a network similar to the Big Ten's cash cow. Three Pac-12 athletic directors told Sporting News a conference network appears a likely option in the next few years.

The financial windfall signals a sacrifice of sorts from USC and UCLA. Under the Pac-10's old financial model, which gave the more successful and most-televised schools more money, the Los Angeles schools reaped major benefits. The new agreement will bring the schools more revenue but reduce the percentage of the pot they receive.

Scott said Thursday that USC and UCLA will receive an extra \$2 million apiece until the total conference hits that \$170 million threshold. Woodward said that the two schools will benefit down the road just as much under the circumstances made official Thursday.

"It's a classic 'rising tide lifts all boats,'" he said. "Being united, and the correlation between dividing equally and being successful, are key components for us going forward."

Getting the schools to agree on the equal-distribution model was as easy as pointing out a practical example, Arizona athletic director Greg Byrne said. America's most successful pro sport, the NFL, and its two most successful college leagues (the SEC and Big Ten) give all their members the same cut.

Such unanimity especially pleased Colorado athletic director Mike Bohn. Bohn sat through the contentious Big 12 meetings this summer, when squabbles over revenue distribution and overall income nearly destroyed that conference.

"It's extremely refreshing to be joining a league with unanimous support from the CEOs on challenging and historic decisions," Bohn told Sporting News by phone. "It puts wind in the sails of every athletic director in the conference."

Thursday's other significant developed was the details of the Pac-12 championship game. Unlike the other existing major-conference contests, the Pac-12 will play its game on the campus of the division winner with the best record.

The athletic directors discussed the more popular neutral-site model and considered several host cities, including Phoenix, San Diego, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle and Denver, Byrne said. Neutral-site games, especially at stadiums with capacities greater than 70,000 fans, brought the prospect of more revenue. But the desire for what Scott and the athletic directors terms a "collegiate atmosphere" around the game won out.

"We're all for an exciting playoff," Utah athletic director Chris Hill told Sporting News by [telephone](#). "It's like the NFL model, where you play at home sites until the Super Bowl. Teams will have earned their way to host."

Thursday brought news that will affect the beginning of football season as well as the end. Hill told Sporting News that athletic directors have agreed to not sign contracts for nonconference games to be played after the first three weekends of the regular season. Existing contracts will be grandfathered in, but all future nonconference games for the league will be set for September.

As for conference games, newcomers Colorado and Utah as well as Arizona and Arizona State own the advantage of playing in Los Angeles each season. The schools in Washington and Oregon are expected to visit Southern California, a recruiting hotbed, once every other year. (Cal and Stanford, though in the North Division, will have protected annual rivalries with South Division teams UCLA and USC.)

Bohn raved about the annual opportunity for CU to play in front the 24,000 university alumni in California. Washington's Woodward downplayed the lack of games in L.A., saying Huskies coach Steve Sarkisian would flash the UW logo all January as he recruited the area.

No matter the issue, everyone linked to the Pac-12 on Thursday spun things to the positive. And with more money for everyone and a creative take on the title game, the outlook seems strong for the transforming league.

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