

Defensive coordinator only second assistant to get such a deal

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The Colorado athletic department is finalizing a multi-year contract with defensive coordinator Kent Baer, athletic director Mike Bohn said.

Baer was hired in January after spending the previous five seasons at San Jose State, the final three with coach Mike MacIntyre. Together, they orchestrated one of the biggest turnarounds in the college game in recent memory. The Spartans were 2-10 in their first season under MacIntyre and Baer in 2010 and finished last season 11-2 with a bowl victory and ranked in the national polls.

In an interview before spring practices began, Baer said he came to Colorado because he has a lot of respect for the school but also because he enjoys coaching alongside MacIntyre.

"Some people say, 'It's got to be hard for you to do that as a coordinator when Mac has been a coordinator,' " Baer said. "It's not because him and I work together really, really well. I like our defensive staff and they totally understand what we want to do. It's just a matter of getting the right personnel and putting them in the right spots and getting it done."

Baer will be just the second assistant coach in CU history to receive a multi-year deal. Former offensive coordinator Eric Bienenmy became the first when he was hired away from the Minnesota Vikings in 2010 to join Jon Embree's staff. Both Embree and Bienenmy played at CU and helped build the program into a national champion in 1990. They weren't nearly as successful coaching in Boulder and were fired after a 1-11 season last fall.

Bienenmy earned nearly \$500,000 annually, with a base salary of \$250,000 and clauses regarding sponsorship support and community outreach. He was also eligible for up to \$50,000 in incentive pay each year related to the academic success of players.

Baer, 61, is expected to earn more because of his wealth of experience as a coordinator. Colorado is the ninth Bowl Championship Subdivision school at which Baer has served as a defensive coordinator in a coaching career that began 40 years ago.

It's uncertain if Baer will have similar provisions in his contract in addition to a higher salary. Baer's deal will likely include many of the standard perks that most of CU's head coaches get such as a courtesy car and membership to the Boulder Country Club.

When Colorado made the change, it doubled the salary pool for MacIntyre and his staff from approximately \$2.5 million. Embree and his staff earned annually to nearly \$5 million.

This spring Baer began working with a defense that ranked among the worst in the nation last season. Baer was asked prior to spring about making the Buffs more competitive, especially in the Pac-12 Conference where they have been blown out of most of the games they have played in their first two years in the league.

"Yeah, I totally believe we can do it, but is it going to happen overnight? Probably not," he said. "I don't know."

"... A lot of it is matchups and putting guys in the right positions to win those matchups."

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