



COLORADO BUFFALOES

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Colorado Athletic Director Mike Bohn

Photo Courtesy: CUBuffs.com



Bohn Addresses Facilities, Financials At Media Event

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WESTMINSTER, Colo. -- University of Colorado Athletic Director Mike Bohn began his quarterly media roundtable on Tuesday under a clear blue sky, and after an hour filled with poetic optimism and unwavering conviction it seemed like a rather appropriate setting for such an event.

Despite a year of fiscal loss off the field and some disappointment on it, Bohn never wavered in front of a handful of local reporters who may have expected something of a eulogy rather than the commendation he delivered.

"Although it was a challenging year for many reasons, we believe we are getting better and better every day," Bohn said. "It doesn't always show up on the scoreboard in some sports, but our commitment is there."

Bohn began his address by identifying each of the hurdles placed before the athletic department over the 2012-13 year. He acknowledged the need for an improvement in facilities in order to enhance the school's recruitment efforts and boost visibility in the sometimes ever-changing landscape of college athletics.

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"We recognize the need for improvement but what we do have is better than most people think and a number of Pac-12 officials have told me the same thing," Bohn said. "We are behind, but we're striving. We're continuing to pace nicely, not just in terms of facilities but at everything put together."

The talk of a new indoor football practice facility continues to be at the forefront of the university's future plans and Bohn continued to expound upon the details of those plans on Tuesday.

"We know that we need an indoor practice facility in order to compete with the other Pac-12 schools," said Bohn. "It will be an anchor for our program and we're hustling to raise money this summer (to make it happen). It will also help our other programs because many of them will have the opportunity to be able to practice there."

Bohn spoke in length about the future of the track and field program and its need for an upgrade in facilities as the long term future of the ancient Balch Fieldhouse becomes less and less viable with each passing year.

"We know we need to find a workout place for our track program because Balch isn't a long term solution," said Bohn. "It's important to find an avenue to help (cross country/rack coach Mark) Wetmore with whatever he needs in order to improve his team and to recruit."

The department's fiscal losses over the past year can be attributed almost directly to the lack of success by its football program which is traditionally the biggest money maker in college athletics.



In 2012, the Buffaloes struggled through a tumultuous 1-11 campaign under second-year head coach, Jon Embree. As a result, individual ticket sales dwindled significantly and season ticket renewals took a major hit as well. The firing of Embree in November and subsequent hiring of ex-San Jose State head coach, Mike MacIntyre has helped to somewhat stem those losses and Bohn is still hopeful that the number of tickets sold will see a dramatic spike as the start of the season draws nearer. That, coupled with a recent surge in attendance at both men's and women's basketball games makes Bohn and the department very optimistic.

"We had tremendous attendance numbers in basketball (last year)," Bohn said. "We even set some attendance records for the men and attendance for the women was second best in the conference. Those numbers help us win games, they help us recruit, and they help us to keep our head coaches."

"I also think our football numbers will improve. We have left our pricing structure the same so we are hopeful we will see a bump in attendance this fall."

Another reason for the lower financial numbers is the lack of a television deal between the conference's Pac-12 Network and the nation's biggest satellite cable company, DirecTV. The inability of the more than 35 million DirecTV subscribers to access the Pac-12 Network decreases the visibility of each university and makes the conference as a whole less viable than those they are competing against in terms of both recruiting and marketing.

"We are frustrated as a conference that there is still no deal done with DirecTV," Bohn said. "It is a huge piece we're missing. We have

four of the five major carriers already so we are hopeful that something will get worked out soon."

Amidst a number of hopeful propositions, Bohn welcomed the opportunity to speak favorably about the university's impressive overall GPA among student-athletes which saw an unprecedented increase during the 2012-13 school year. The overall GPA of Colorado student-athletes for the spring 2013 semester was 2.935, the

Tuesday's media event was also a celebration for former coach Bill McCartney who will be inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in December

Photo Courtesy: Chip Bromfield, Promotion, Ltd

highest on record. That after a fall semester in which student-athletes achieved a GPA that was the best for any fall semester on record.

"We are very proud to see our athletes perform so well in the classroom," Bohn said. "We will continue to recruit the best student-athletes to our university and hopefully (those numbers will continue to increase)."

Bohn also spoke enthusiastically about the impending addition of a women's lacrosse program which will begin play in the spring of 2014. The team will play its home games at nearby Kittredge Field and bring the university's number of NCAA regulated athletic programs to 17.

"We are excited that by this time next year we will be just concluding our first season of women's lacrosse," said Bohn. "We will install a new field turf at Kittredge and we are hopeful the team will play its first game at Folsom with Ralphie leading them onto the field."

Bohn's roundtable closed with the assurance that he and the department are working vehemently towards making sure the university starts to distinguish itself from the rest of the Pac-12. He spoke of increased equity for the coaches and then talked passionately about the Coaches Caravan event that is becoming a harbor for creating a bond between programs and for promoting the spirit of camaraderie with a fan base that covers the entire state. And as he left the room an entire university awaits the promise of what lies ahead.

SHOW MENU



Football: CU Buffs athletic department suffers financial loss

By Brian Howell Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

WESTMINSTER -- A poor season on the gridiron will contribute to a losing year financially for the Colorado athletic department.

CU will show a significant financial loss when the fiscal year ends on June 30.

"We recognize that we'll have a deficit," CU athletic director Mike Bohn said on Tuesday at a media roundtable. "That is a deficit that we will be required to cover long-term within our plan and budgeting process."

It is too early to predict the total deficit because several factors could impact the bottom line, but Bohn said, "We recognize that this is a challenging year for us, for a lot of different reasons."

CU also had a deficit a year ago, but much of that was due to the penalty CU had to pay to leave the Big 12 for the Pac-12.

This year's deficit was not planned, as the football team struggled more than anyone anticipated. With a 1-11 record in football, the Buffs didn't bring in the revenue they normally do.

"We missed our ticket revenue piece on football dramatically," Bohn said. "When we miss our ticket revenue number in football by over \$2 million, that creates a significant challenge for us."

Because of the poor performance on the field and, therefore, financially, CU decided to fire head coach Jon Embree. That led to CU needing to come up with more than \$2 million to buy out the contracts of Embree and former offensive coordinator Eric Bieniemy.

CU then made a heavy financial commitment to new head football coach Mike MacIntyre and his staff. MacIntyre will make about \$2 million annual; Embree made roughly \$750,000.

While the football program contributed to the deficit, it wasn't the only factor. It didn't help that Pac-12 Enterprises, which has developed and launched Pac-12 Networks and Pac-12 Digital, has not produced any revenue for conference schools.

Bohn said Pac-12 Enterprises had a great year, in terms of producing roughly 750 events and giving the conference more exposure and that it could become profitable in the near future.

"We recognize the long-term vision to have that be a profitable enterprise for the league," he said.

Failure to reach a deal with DirecTV certainly impacted potential revenue for Pac-12 Enterprises. DirecTV is the only major provider that has not agreed to carry the Pac-12 Networks.

"Everyone associated with the Pac-12 and people in this room are frustrated by not having an agreement done with DirecTV," Bohn said. "But it's a top priority for (pac-12 commissioner Larry Scott) and his team with Pac-12 Enterprises."

According to the USA Today's database on college athletics finances, CU's athletic department turned a profit every year from 2006-2011.

"We knew when we made the move from the Big 12 to the Pac-12 that this two-to-three year window was going to be a challenge for us," Bohn said.

Bohn also stressed that the athletic department will use "no state money, no tuition money, no resources of that nature" to cover the deficit.

Notable

Bohn said CU is on pace with where it was a year ago with 75 percent of football season ticket holders renewing their tickets. ... Bohn said "the process is underway" for making enhancements to the contracts of men's basketball coach Tad Boyle and women's basketball coach Linda Lappe. ... Field turf will be installed at Kittredge Field on campus and permanent women's lacrosse markings will be included on that field. The turf will allow the women's lacrosse team, which will play its inaugural season in the spring of 2014, to play in inclement weather. ... Last month, there were reports that the Pac-12 was considering an eight-game conference schedule for football, down from the current nine-game model. Bohn said Tuesday, "That wasn't talked about and I don't believe it's really on the table."

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Colorado booster has given a \$1 million donation

The Denver Post The Denver Post

Posted:

DenverPost.com

WESTMINSTER — A Colorado booster has given a \$1 million donation toward the school's fundraising drive to upgrade facilities, a source close to the athletic department said Tuesday.

Athletic director Mike Bohn, at a media round-table discussion at Bender's Bar and Grill, would not confirm any major donations.

He also would not give a total of donations raised toward the \$50 million needed from private fundraising to help pay for the \$170 million upgrades.

"We're pleased with the momentum we have there," Bohn said. "We recognize we have a lot of work to do."

Called the Sustained Excellence Initiative, the project will include an academic center below the east stands of Folsom Field and an indoor practice facility on the practice field.

The university must have a major plan in place by Dec. 1 or first-year football coach Mike MacIntyre can leave without penalty. The school then must have a design contract awarded by Dec. 1, 2014.

"It takes time to build things," Bohn said. "If you remember how long it took us to build the basketball practice facility at Coors. That was 11,000 square feet? Think (this is) six times that."

On other matters, Bohn said:

- Football season ticket sales are on pace with last year's total of 21,000. Bohn said they have 75 percent renewals.
- The indoor facility might include a track for the track program.

"Our feasibility is working on trying to put that together," Bohn said.

He said he didn't know if that would be a full or partial track.

- This summer the school will put in FieldTurf on the new women's lacrosse field.

If weather permits the team's historical first game next spring will be played in Folsom Field and the players will run out behind Ralphie, the buffalo mascot.

- The school will bid for NCAA regional tournaments in volleyball and women's soccer.
- The Colorado football coaches caravan begins Monday from noon-1:15 p.m. at Ptarmigan Country Club in Fort Collins, 4:15-4:45 at the Bolder Boulder Office at 1710 29th St. #1068 and 5-7 p.m. at Ted's Montana Grill Happy Hour, 1701 Pearl St. in Boulder. The public is welcome.