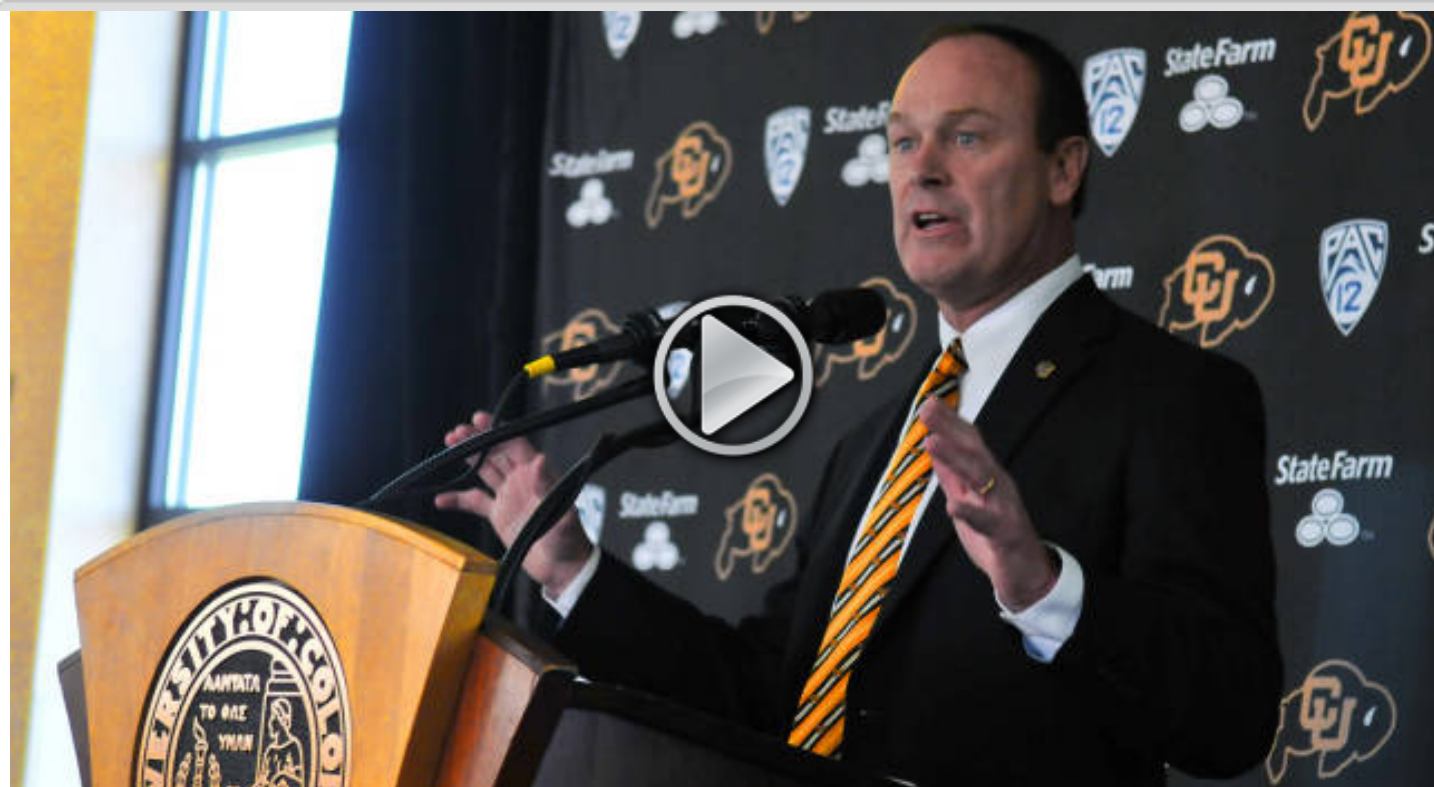




New Colorado Athletic Director Rick George
 Photo Courtesy: Casey Cass, University of Colorado



Brooks: Rick George Eager To Embrace Changes At CU

Release: 07/17/2013 Courtesy: B.G. Brooks, Contributing Editor

BOULDER – As the guy he answered to at Colorado in the late '80s/early '90s famously said, "Things have changed."

Rick George is about to discover how much.

When he uttered his oft-repeated line, former Buffs football coach Bill McCartney was referring to the food chain in the old Big Eight Conference. McCartney's CU team had supplanted Nebraska as the league's top predator – and that's as far as we'll step back into that day.

George, then in his late-20s, was Mac The First's assistant AD for football operations. He returned to Boulder Wednesday as Mac II's (Mike MacIntyre) boss, having signed on as CU's new director of athletics. Things have changed, indeed.

What George steps into in 2013, both locally and nationally, bears little resemblance to what he left when he waved so-long to college athletics in 1998. Since then, he's remained in sports but in different positions at

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different levels – a factor that played well to the CU search committee.

“I’ve been in sports all my life and never done anything else . . . I don’t want to do anything else,” George told athletic department staffers about an hour before his introductory press conference in the Byron White Club Room at Folsom Field.

George had prepared remarks to deliver to the athletic department staff but instead chose to “speak from the heart.” He called Wednesday “a great day for me . . . it’s great to be back home.”

In a career built on athletics, CU was George’s second stop, with Illinois – his alma mater – being the first. His last college stop was Vanderbilt, his career path then taking him into golf and baseball at the executive levels from 1998 until he begins his new job at CU next month.

But all the while, his and wife Nancy’s eyes were on returning to Boulder and CU, which he called his “dream job.” There were other dreams as well: Topping the list was to be a general manager in the NFL, with an athletic directorship – preferably at CU – not far behind. An all-star resume probably would have made George a prime NFL GM candidate had he pursued an opening in that sport.

Had that happened CU’s search for an AD might have turned in another direction. But those who knew George when he was in Boulder and have stayed in touch with him since the first go-around knew his passion rested at the foot of the Flatirons.

“It’s great to be back,” he told the press conference. “There’s no place I’d rather be . . . my wife and I have been working for this for 30 years.”

In the late ‘80s, George left a lasting impression on Darian Hagan, then an option quarterback in Los Angeles that McCartney believed could be a program-changer for the Buffaloes. Turns out he was right, and George was the point man in CU’s recruitment of Hagan.

“He was the natural sales person who made the first phone call and introduced the University of Colorado to you,” Hagan recalled. “He sold Coach Mac’s vision, then it was up to the coaches to close the deal.

“The first thing that attracted me to this place was (George’s) passion and his energy. He was a guy who didn’t take ‘no’ for an answer. He was persistent and energetic in everything about the university.”

In that respect, George hasn’t changed even if the university and the college landscape have. What’s more, the changes haven’t been subtle, more like a tire iron to the temple. Since George left Boulder, Buffs football has bobbed three times under four coaches and finally gone under. Basketball has flourished of late; skiing and cross country are still winning national championships, but the athletic department is hobbling along at a significant deficit.

I asked George how his perception of how things might have changed at CU since his departure in 1991 and this was part of his answer: “That would probably be a good question for 60 days from now, when I’ve been here and been spending 24 hours a day trying to get us better . . . it’s Colorado as I remember it – a great institution with great student-athletes and a great future. I firmly believe our best days are ahead.”

Still, when he officially begins work next month, he’ll find the job description of that AD job he once dreamed about is very different. Athletic directors now are nine parts businessmen and one part of whatever else the position requires, with fund-raising abilities **bold faced** on their resumes.

CU needs an efficient, high-powered and tireless fund raiser to make good on a facilities improvement project initiated by George’s predecessor, Mike Bohn. George & Co. need to hit a \$50 million target by early December, and George calls that “doable. Heck, yeah. We’ll hit the ground running and hit that goal . . . I know what I’m capable of doing with great people around me.”

Pay attention to that; team work and unity are two ingredients that George values greatly. “I want everybody on the same rope, tugging in the same direction,” he said at his press conference. “I don’t have all the answers, but the people around me do.”

An hour before, he told the athletic department staffers: "What I've heard and seen is that it's kind of splintered here . . . I've heard it's a splintered Buffs Nation. We've got people who are pointing fingers."

And later at his press conference when asked about divisions: "I've got a pretty good sense of what's going on . . . change is sometimes very difficult, but good when you look back at it historically. I think Mike Bohn did a good job; I've got a lot of respect for Mike. Now it's my responsibility to take this athletic department to another level. I've heard about the division . . . it's all about team, working together, getting everybody on the same page. I'm a firm believer in that."

Those who know George best say his passion and energy haven't dwindled through his nearly three decades in athletics. Winning is as vital to him now as then: "I've never played a game – even with my daughters, who are now 24 (Christi) and 28 (Jenni) – to finish second."

As expected, George speaks highly of Mac The First, noting that McCartney's attention to family and detail have stuck with him since he left Boulder. "I learned a lot from Mac, but I'm my own person," George said. His introduction to Mac II (MacIntyre) came Wednesday morning, although both men say they might have unknowingly crossed paths when they and their families lived in Nashville and Dallas at the same time.

George spoke with men's basketball coach Tad Boyle by phone Wednesday and met women's coach Linda Lappe before her team began practice for next month's European tour. George also visited with other CU coaches who were in town and on campus.

After wrapping up his duties with the Rangers, George will return to Boulder on Aug. 11 to attend a football practice, then will officially begin work the next day. He says CU staffers will find "a leadership style that is personal . . . I'll get to know everybody (and) everybody will know their roles and everybody will be accountable."

Hagan believes him: "He's very open, very honest. He won't hide behind closed doors . . . he's well-deserving and I'm really glad he's here."

Things have changed in Boulder, but so has Rick George in the two-plus decades he's been away. The CU athletics department is poised to reap the benefits.

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The Washington Post

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Colorado hires Rick George of Texas Rangers as new athletic director

By Associated Press, Published: July 17

Rick George helped build the University of Colorado into a football powerhouse in the early 1990s. Now, he's going back to his roots in a bid to buttress the entire athletic department.



The 53-year-old resigned from his role as a Texas Rangers executive Wednesday to become the school's athletic director, effective Aug. 12.

He's returning to the campus where he served as the Buffaloes' assistant athletic director for football operations from 1987-91 during Hall of Fame coach Bill McCartney's tenure.

"When I was here (before), it was Ralphie II," George said, referring to the school's buffalo mascot. "Today it's Ralphie V, so I've been gone a while. As you can imagine, I've lost a little of my hair, I've gained a little weight. The one thing I haven't lost is my passion for CU and CU athletics."

George will make \$700,000 a year over five years, plus incentives that could push his annual pay well over \$1 million, pending approval by the board of regents.

His predecessor, Mike Bohn, was forced out in May after eight years in charge of the athletic program despite being the most successful AD in school history in terms of fundraising. At the time, Chancellor Philip DiStefano said he wanted someone who would run the department like a business, one with an annual budget of \$60 million.

"We found that person," DiStefano said Wednesday.

The school wants to raise \$50 million in private funds to help pay for \$170 million in facility facelifts.

"Is it doable? Heck yeah," George said. "We'll hit that goal, because we're going to work hard at it."

George has spent the last three decades as a sports executive on the pro and collegiate levels.

In his first stop in Boulder, he was credited with helping to build the talent base that made Colorado one of the

most successful football programs in the country. He also was executive vice president and chief of operations for the PGA Tour, and he's held administrative positions at Vanderbilt and the University of Illinois, where he was a four-year starter in football.

George joined the Rangers as chief operating officer in 2010 and was promoted to president of business operations in March.

"We wish Rick well as he pursues his passion of college athletics," Rangers CEO Nolan Ryan said. "We appreciate his many contributions the past few years, particularly his efforts to help us increase revenues and attendance to record levels."

George said he wouldn't have left the Rangers for just any job, but said during a news conference at Folsom Field, "I'm here today because I'm convinced this is the best job at the best university in the best conference in the nation."

Over the last three years, the Rangers set club records for sales and sponsorship revenue and surpassed the 3 million mark in home attendance for the first time last season.

Those are the skills Colorado is looking for as it seeks a boost in fundraising, the elimination of a \$7.5 million budget shortfall and the fixing of a fan base fractured after years of embarrassing afternoons on the football field.

"Rick's financial and management acumen, his networking and relationship development skills, and his enthusiasm, work ethic and principled leadership all make him the ideal leader for CU athletics at this important and challenging moment in our history," DiStefano said.

Bohn made successful hires in Tad Boyle and Linda Lappe in basketball but also fired football coaches Gary Barnett, Dan Hawkins and Jon Embree, requiring costly buyouts.

Bohn replaced Embree in December with Mike MacIntyre, who met with George for the first time before his new boss's introductory news conference Wednesday. The two appeared to hit it off right away.

"He's got pedigree, he's got the character that we want to lead this program and he's got the experience that's going to bring CU-Boulder's football back to winning championships," George said.

Follow Arnie Melendrez Stapleton on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/arniestapleton>

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CU names new 'business-oriented' Athletic Director

7:11 PM, Jul 17, 2013

KUSA - When the University of Colorado fired Mike Bohn, phrases like "manage a business", "engage donors" and "increase fundraising" were used. The University thinks they have found a man that will encompass all those phrases.

CU-Boulder Chancellor Philip P. DiStefano has named Rick George as director of intercollegiate athletics. Currently George serves as president of business operations for the Texas Rangers major league baseball team and will remain in that role until August 12th.

George has spent more than three decades as a sports executive in the collegiate and professional ranks, including a stint as assistant athletic director for football operations for CU from 1987-91.

"I am delighted that Rick has accepted our offer to lead our athletic department," said DiStefano in a press release from the school. "Rick's financial and management acumen, his networking and relationship development skills, and his enthusiasm, work ethic and principled leadership all make him the ideal leader for CU athletics at this important and challenging moment in our history."

In the same release, George said he was delighted to be returning to the campus that played a key role in shaping his career.

"I am honored to be selected as director of intercollegiate athletics at CU-Boulder," said George. "CU is a special place for my family and me, and this is a marvelous opportunity at a great university in the best collegiate athletic conference in the country. I am looking forward to getting back to CU to begin working at this great institution."

George and the chancellor agreed to a five-year contract, pending approval of the Board of Regents. He will be introduced at a press conference Wednesday afternoon.

Rick George introduced as CU Buffs' new \$700,000-a-year athletic director

By Kyle Ringo, Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

The University of Colorado made new athletic director Rick George the highest paid administrator in the history of the school and the CU system Wednesday when it hired him to lead its financially troubled athletic department.

George, who previously worked at the school (1987-1991) as director of football operations for former coach Bill McCartney, called the athletic director position his dream job. He said it is one of a small handful of jobs that were attractive enough to get him to leave his post as president of business operations for the Texas Rangers in Major League Baseball. George had been in that job since 2010. His first day at CU will be Aug. 12.

"I'm here today because I'm convinced this is the best job at the best university in the best conference," George said at his midday introductory press conference on the club level at Folsom Field. George is a graduate of the University of Illinois where he played football for four seasons in the 1980s.

After doubling the football coaching staff's salary pool to approximately \$5 million in December when it hired Mike MacIntyre and recently giving basketball coach Tad Boyle a sizeable raise, CU leaders are putting up the money to back up rhetoric about competing for Pac-12 Conference and national titles.

Chancellor Phil DiStefano said George's name landed on his desk early in the process of searching for a replacement for former AD Mike Bohn, whom DiStefano ousted in late-May after eight years. DiStefano said he, President Bruce Benson and a small search committee settled on George recently when it became clear he was their best candidate.

DiStefano said George was the sole finalist for the job, though he did talk with approximately six other people who had interest in the position. He said he would not characterize those discussions as interviews.

In addition to his \$700,000 base salary, George is eligible to earn incentives for fundraising, sponsorship, licensing, academic achievement and other successes that could raise his compensation to as much as \$1.3 million a year. The contract must be approved by the Board of Regents next month, but that is expected to be a formality.

"It's to get that talent," DiStefano said explaining why he felt he needed to pay George twice as much as CU was paying Bohn. "To be competitive in the Pac-12, with coaches' salaries and AD's salaries I believe you have to be competitive. You have to pay the market price."

George inherits an athletic department mired in debt caused by forfeiting nearly two years of conference revenue when it moved from the Big 12 to the Pac-12, three football coaching changes in seven years and poor football ticket sales in 2012.

DiStefano said at the outset of the search that he wanted to hire a candidate who could run the athletic department more like a business and balance its budget every year. Perhaps most importantly, DiStefano valued a candidate with a strong record in fundraising.

George worked in fundraising at Vanderbilt University after leaving CU. He also worked for a nonprofit children's charity group raising money before he moved back into the sports world leading the Champions Tour and the PGA Tour in professional golf.

CU announced plans in February to raise at least \$50 million privately of \$170 million in funds needed for facilities upgrades and new construction in and around Folsom Field. The athletic department has never raised even \$16 million in one year but a feasibility study conducted last year by an outside agency said \$50 million was an achievable goal without including a timeline for doing it.

George wasn't specific when asked what he will do differently that will allow CU to meet its historic fundraising goals, but he made it clear he believes reaching the goal and more is possible.

"I've got to be out in front in our fundraising," George said. "I'm excited about that. I think it's about relationships and people believing in what you're doing."

George said one of his first priorities will be getting all CU supporters to put aside disagreements and hurt feelings from the past and come together to support the department.

"I know today this is kind of a divided Buff nation," he said. "It's time that we get that nation back together. We don't need to point fingers anymore."

DiStefano was specific about what convinced him that George can get the fundraising job done.

"When you look at his record with sponsorships with the PGA and what he has turned around in the Rangers as far as selling tickets and if you look at his resume from when he started to now, he's the president of business operations," DiStefano said. "He has the right personality. He has been part of CU when we were in our glory days and we want to bring back those glory days."

"I think that he can work with not just the major donors that we talk about all the time. What we have to do to raise the \$50 million and to raise more than \$50 (million) is bring in new donors. You don't want to rely on one or two people all the time. I think he has the skills the personality to get in front of people and to convince them to invest in CU."

George and CU badly need first-year football coach Mike MacIntyre to show progress in turning around the department's flagship program. George said he met MacIntyre for the first time on Wednesday and is eager to work with him and help him in whatever ways he can. MacIntyre said he believes George's reputation as a great recruiter will help his program. George played an integral role in recruiting some of the biggest stars of CU football in the late 1980s and early 1990s, including Alfred Williams, Deon Figures, Joel Steed and Mike Pritchard.

"The other thing that is exciting to me is he has worked in have-not situations, nonprofits and that kind of thing, where you have to go and talk to people and raise money," MacIntyre said. "That's

an art. It really is.

"The thing to me that weighs over everything is his passion to be at CU. It's going to take an ultimate amount of energy and passion for us to be successful."

Follow Kyle on Twitter @KyleRingo

New AD takes over program that's trying to get back on its feet

By Kyle Ringo Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

New Colorado athletic director Rick George must be crazy.

Why would a successful executive of a Major League Baseball franchise that has won two American League pennants in recent years choose to give up that job to take over an athletic department with major financial challenges and a football program trying to claw its way out of the cellar of the Football Bowl Subdivision?

"It's funny. The people that know me, this wasn't a surprise," George said. "The people that know me know this is my passion."

George said a lot of people helped him find his way back to Boulder but few played a bigger role in his return to a school and town he loves than his father, Dick.

George said his father had been encouraging him to return to college athletics prior to suffering a stroke last summer. Dick George died in October. He was 78.

"He kept telling me, 'You need to get back into college athletics. That's your passion,'" George said. "When this became available and came open, I was like, 'This is the right thing for me to do.' It was difficult (Tuesday) telling people that I'm leaving to come here, but now that I'm here, I'm thrilled with my decision.

George, who will begin work at CU in earnest on Aug. 12, played football at the University of Illinois in the 1980s before coming to CU to work for Bill McCartney. His days in Boulder helping build the Buffs into a national power and eventual national champion had a profound effect on him. It put the CU program on equal footing with his alma mater. He said he has kept CU and Illinois apparel in his closet in the years since he moved on to other positions and endeavors.

He believes that passion for CU will help him succeed in turning around the department, updating the way it does business and reaching new heights in raising money and ticket sales.

"I can go out and help get people excited about this university and help fill the stands and get people excited about it," George said.

During his introductory press conference at Folsom Field on Wednesday, George acknowledged the department he is taking over has plenty of ground to make up on the competition in the Pac-12 Conference and many other schools around the nation. He's confident CU can chase down the competition with a consistent and persistent approach over time.

"I want everybody on the same rope, tugging in the same direction," he said. "I don't have all the answers, but the people around me do."

While his father's advice played in a big role in George deciding to make the career change, there were other factors at work. George said he and his wife have loved Colorado and the

Boulder area since he worked here as director of football operations under former coach Bill McCartney.

He said they have been working on plans to build a home in the Breckenridge area and this move will either further those plans or allow them to alter them a bit with a home in Boulder.

"My wife and I have been working for this for 30 years," he said.

George said he understands he is facing a big challenge but he sees it as an opportunity. He said he expects rebuilding CU into a nationally competitive and prominent athletic department will be painful at times but achieving the goal will be worth going through the hard times he expects still lie ahead.

George said he plans to try to expand the departments donor base significantly by meeting with people face to face and selling them on a vision for what a successful athletic department can mean to the school and the community.

"I'm thrilled to be back in it," George said. "I've learned from the past and I think I'm the right guy for the job."

Follow Kyle on Twitter:

@KyleRingo

School wasted no time contacting former Rangers president

By Brian Howell Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

While some universities have been known to take several months to find an athletic director, Colorado moved swiftly in hiring Rick George.

The former president of business operations for the Texas Rangers, George was introduced Wednesday as CU's next athletics director -- less than two months after parting ways with Mike Bohn and less than four weeks after forming a search committee.

"When we got somebody the caliber of Rick interested in the position, you just go out and get it done," CU chancellor Phil DiStefano said.

George was identified as a potential candidate immediately after Bohn was forced out in May.

"Certainly after Mike's resignation, I got quite a few calls from individuals who were recommending other individuals," DiStefano said. "Rick's name came up numerous times, as well as other people -- sitting ADs."

CU didn't form its search committee until June 21. By then, the process with George was already under way.

"I gave him a call and we talked about it on the phone probably sometime in early to mid-June," DiStefano said. "(Shortly thereafter), we had the search committee working forward on other names."

Although George was identified early as a candidate, Barry said DiStefano wanted the committee to do a thorough search.

"If (George) hadn't wanted the job, we had a deep pool," Barry said. "We had a lot of great interest from around the nation."

Search committee member Doug Looney said there were about a half dozen candidates that were very well qualified, but George stood out.

Interim AD Ceal Barry, who chaired the search committee, said the process went quicker than she anticipated.

"A little bit, because I personally wanted to be ready for the worst-case scenario," Barry said.

But, she added, "It probably couldn't have gone better."

CU did not hire an outside search firm because the committee felt confident in its ability to vet candidates on its own. George's history at CU -- he worked in the department from 1987-1991 -- helped the committee in doing their homework on his background.

Once George was identified as CU's top choice, the Buffs moved quickly. DiStefano and CU

president Bruce Benson flew to Texas to interview George about two weeks ago.

"After the meeting, we were both convinced he was the right person for the job," DiStefano said.

They were so convinced, in fact, that the search committee never did meet with George. Barry knew George from his previous time at CU, but did not meet him during the hiring process until Wednesday morning when she and other administrators flew to Texas to pick him up and bring him to Boulder.

Through research, however, the committee was in unanimous agreement that George was the top candidate, Barry and DiStefano said.

Although DiStefano did initially reach out to six or seven potential candidates, George was the only candidate to get an interview.

"I don't think it's fair when you have somebody of Rick's caliber to interview two or three other people that you know you probably won't hire," DiStefano said. "If it looked as if we weren't able to get him and the interest wasn't there, we'd certainly go to other candidates."

As it turned out, that was not necessary.

"It was clear that he was our first choice and we were his first choice," DiStefano said.

Follow Brian on Twitter:

@BrianHowell33.

CU selects George as athletic director

Josh Lindenstein

BOULDER Texas Rangers' president of business operations Rick George was named the University of Colorado's athletic director, replacing Mike Bohn, who was forced out in May after eight years in the position.

George, who was director of football operations at CU from 1987-91, will begin leading the Buffaloes' athletic department effective Aug. 12, the university announced.

"Rick's financial and management acumen, his networking and relationship development skills, and his enthusiasm, work ethic and principled leadership all make him the ideal leader for CU athletics at this important and challenging moment in our history," CU-Boulder's chancellor Phil DiStefano said in a press release.

George, who has agreed to a five-year contract pending Board of Regents approval, has spent more than 30 years as a sports executive at both the professional and collegiate ranks.

He has been with Major League Baseball's Rangers since 2010 and prior to that served as executive vice president and chief of operations for the PGA Tour. He also worked for the PGA Tour as president of the Champions Tour from 2003-2008, and was president and chief executive of Fore!Kids Foundation, a nonprofit organization that raised money for children's charities.

A four-year starter in football for the University of Illinois, he served as Illini recruiting coordinator from 1983-87 before moving on to CU and helping build the talent base that turned the Buffs into a football power through the 1990s. From CU, he went to Vanderbilt where he served as associate athletic director for external operations.

At CU, he takes over a department that has built momentum in recent years with a move to the Pac-12 Conference and the success of its men's and women's basketball teams, but also a program that's had its share of financial struggles and woes on the gridiron. Mike MacIntyre, getting set for his first season, is the third new head football coach in eight years since Gary Barnett was fired in 2005.

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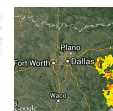
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Rangers executive leaves Texas to run University of Colorado athletics



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GERRY FRALEY

Staff Writer

Published: 17 July 2013 12:20 PM

Updated: 17 July 2013 02:25 PM

Rick George, who received a president's title during the spring-training shake-up of the Texas Rangers' front office, resigned on Wednesday to accept the position of athletics director at Colorado.

George joined the Rangers as chief operating officer in October 2010 and was promoted to president, business operations in March 2013. At the same time, general manager Jon Daniels added president, baseball operations to his title. Ownership removed president from Nolan Ryan's title, leaving him as chief executive officer.

"We wish Rick well as he pursues his passion of college athletics," Ryan said in a statement provided by the team. "We appreciate his many contributions the past few years, particularly his efforts to help us increase revenues and attendance to record levels."

Ryan said the club will immediately begin the search for a successor.

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CU Buffs name Rick George new athletic director

By Terry Frei The Denver Post The Denver Post

Posted:

DenverPost.com

BOULDER — The search that led to the hiring of Rick George as the University of Colorado's new athletic director was neither extensive nor exhaustive. CU-Boulder chancellor Phil DiStefano confirmed that Wednesday, saying the Texas Rangers' president of business operations was identified early in the process as the prime candidate and ultimately was the only one interviewed by the search committee headed by interim AD Ceal Barry — and the meeting happened only Wednesday morning.

"I interviewed Rick and I had four or five phone interviews in the last few weeks," DiStefano said at the Wednesday afternoon news conference at the Byron R. White Stadium Club. He added, "It was clear to me that Rick was by far the top candidate."

George said he first spoke with CU late last month, and that CU president Bruce Benson also became involved.

"I had a great job," George said, "and I'm not sure how I felt at the time, except it was something I wanted to look at. I met with the chancellor and the president, and from then on, I was hoping that it would be the right opportunity for CU and for me."

DiStefano added he met with the search committee "about a week ago, two weeks ago, and talked to them about Rick. They knew about Rick and had his résumé there and they were very, very excited."

Barry, who will return to her position as associate athletic director after nearly two months in the interim AD role, also said several members of the search committee had mentioned George — who was CU's recruiting coordinator and then assistant athletic director for football operations from 1987-91 — as a possible candidate. His name also was mentioned in media speculation as soon as late June, so his selection wasn't a complete shock.

DiStefano said George's official Wednesday morning interview with Barry's search committee was set up with the understanding "they could come back to me" if they didn't want to sign off on the choice of George. The chancellor added, "But when they came back to me, it was all very positive."

George's five-year contract, which the Daily Camera reported to be \$700,000 per year and could hit \$1.3 million with incentives, still has to be approved by CU's board of regents. Former AD Mike Bohn made \$306,000.

George, 53, complimented the coaching staff — in all sports — he is inheriting, including new football coach Mike MacIntyre, and basketball coaches Tad Boyle and Linda Lappe, recently awarded contract extensions.

"I'm here today because I am convinced that this is the best job at the best university in the best conference in the nation," George said.

But George also emphasized he knows his major challenges will include winning back disaffected donors, including some upset with the firing of Bohn on May 28 after eight years; and to be a conciliator and rallying force as the athletic department deals with \$20 million in debt carrying over from previous years and a \$7.5 million shortfall for the 2012-13 school year; plus the goal of raising \$50 million to seed a \$270 million facilities upgrade.

"I feel strongly that unity is our best path to success, making sure that we're all on the same page, we share the same values, the same ideals, the same goals," George said. "And that we're moving and charging, as they would say, in the right direction as a Buffalo. ... I know there are some factions out there. I know that today this is kind of a divided Buff nation. It's time that we get everybody together. It's time that we get all of our constituents, all of our alumni, all of our fans, city of Boulder, Denver, Front Range, the state of Colorado, that we all get together and we all support each other. Don't point fingers anymore. Let's don't worry about decisions that have been made. I've always been taught to look forward, don't look backward."

After the news conference, George acknowledged that it is "not roses."

"I've talked to the president and the chancellor and I'm aware of some of the opportunities that are here," George said. "If everything was roses, I wouldn't be here. I like opportunities, and I'm excited about it. I don't think there's anything we can't do if we come together and do it."

George said he hoped to soon meet with CU's top athletic department contributor, George Solich, who was a Bohn backer.

"I'm going to hopefully get an audience and tell him where I think we can go," George said.

Said DiStefano: "I think (George) can bring back a number of individuals and, as he said, individuals that are maybe sitting on the sidelines over the last couple of weeks, I believe that they'll be up and front right now."

DiStefano also said he had cleared the limited scope of the search, including the lack of formal interviews beyond a single candidate.

"We met with human resources, and said we thought we would have one candidate," DiStefano said, "and they said, 'That's fine to do.' And we did."

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Rick's ride

Rick George, the new athletic director at the University of Colorado, said Wednesday: "I've gone into industries I've got no business making it in." A look at his career path:

Major League Baseball

Texas Rangers: Hired in October 2010 as chief operating officer.

Golf

PGA Tour: Hired in June 2008 as executive vice president and chief of operations.

Champions Tour: Hired in January 2003 as the first president of the 50-and-older tour.

Fore! Kids Foundation: Hired in August 1998 as president of the nonprofit organization, which helps children's charities.

Colleges

Vanderbilt: Associate athletic director, 1991-98.

CU: Assistant AD/football operations, 1987-91.

Illinois: Recruiting coordinator, 1983-87, at his alma mater.

Kiszla: This hiring by CU Buffs had better make a lot of cents

By Mark Kiszla The Denver Post The Denver Post

Posted:

DenverPost.com

BOULDER — Way back when Rick George previously worked at the University of Colorado, he helped the Buffaloes win a national championship in football that nobody under the age of 25 can possibly remember.

So when George was introduced Wednesday as CU's new athletic director, I shook his hand and got right down to the real nitty gritty.

My question: Can a national championship in football be won again by the Buffs?

"Sure it can. Yes, I believe it can. No question about it," George replied, without a second of hesitation.

OK, glad we got that straight. Now everybody knows the new CU athletic director is:

- A) Bravely ambitious
- B) Stark raving mad
- C) Both

George left a sweet gig as an executive with the Texas Rangers because he loves CU, where he was the assistant athletic director of football operations when coach Bill McCartney won the national title in 1990.

But a heart full of love and an empty wallet will get an athletic director fired, as Mike Bohn found out.

"We want to compete for championships. We're all in," George told me.

"You talk about throwing money at it. We've got to do it the right way. But I wouldn't be here if I didn't think we could compete in the highest level in all our sports. I'd have no interest in it if that wasn't our shared goal."

After George was hired at the hefty base salary of \$700,000, two members of the CU search committee, including legendary basketball coach Ceal Barry, said it is time for the Buffaloes to step up their game.

I was told in no uncertain terms Bohn got fired for a simple reason: He couldn't raise sufficient funds for Colorado to compete against Oregon or Alabama. If the Buffs want to get back on top, they have to spend money and lots of it. George's first major task will be to raise \$50 million in private funds as a down payment for \$170 million in facility upgrades.

While basketball coaches Tad Boyle and Linda Lappe have proved the Buffaloes can compete at a high level in the Pacific 12 Conference, the Colorado football team has gone 3-15 in its new

league, often losing by embarrassing scores of 50-6 (against USC) and 48-0 (Stanford).

It's football that pays the bills in college sports. New football coach Mike MacIntyre was hired a scant few months before Bohn was fired, a move that seems strange, even by the head-scratching standards of CU.

There is no history between MacIntyre and George. In fact, the new athletic director had never met the most critical person in his department until Wednesday. Let's hope they learn to like each other, because Colorado's plans for revitalization won't work unless George and MacIntyre make a good team.

"In my first head coaching job at San Jose State, I was there three years. I worked for three ADs, and I worked for three presidents. Everything changed every year for me. So what I did is I kept doing my thing, kept working and kept taking care of my players and my coaches. You could look around and make excuses for everything. But you can't be successful that way," MacIntyre said.

"I think any person, working anywhere in America, if his direct boss leaves, it's always a little bit anxious. ... Not just in football, but in any business. I think anybody would feel a little bit anxious about that."

No matter how savvy a business planner George proves to be or how slick his sales pitch, nothing sells like success. To maximize fundraising, the Buffaloes need to win football games.

"I believe college football at any university, but especially at BCS universities, is the curb appeal for the university," MacIntyre said. "The football team reaches more people, it touches more emotional streams and it touches more pocketbooks. That's just a fact of life. I'm a big boy, and I understand it."

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Rick George hired as Colorado Buffaloes athletic director

By David Krause *The Denver Post* *The Denver Post*

Posted:

DenverPost.com

BOULDER — Rick George has been named the athletic director at the University of Colorado, the school announced Wednesday. During a news conference at Folsom Field, he said he was thrilled to be back.

George, who was the Buffaloes' director of football operations from 1987-91, has spent nearly the past three years as the chief operating officer of the Texas Rangers, who hired him in October 2010.

"I'm here today because I'm convinced this is the best job at the best university in the best conference," George said, later adding, "I have not lost my passion for CU athletics."

He has agreed to a five-year contract and will start working at Colorado on Aug. 12. The contract has to be approved by the Board of Regents, which is expected to meet and go over the contract in early August.

"I know today this is kind of a divided Buff nation. It's time that we get that nation back together," George said. "We don't need to point fingers anymore. ... I've always been taught to always look forward don't look backward, and that's what I intend to do. We have to pull together, and not pull apart anymore."

George served as the executive vice president of the PGA Tour before joining the Rangers. He was the president of the Champions Tour, which is the golf tour for players 50-and-older, from 2003-08.

"Rick emerged as a candidate fairly early," CU-Boulder chancellor Phil DiStefano said. "Nothing I threw out fazed him in the least. He just said, 'Keep them coming.' "

DiStefano said he interviewed a handful of candidates on the phone, but George is the only one who met with the school's search committee. And that meeting didn't happen until Wednesday morning.

George replaces Mike Bohn, who was fired in May.

"I have a lot of respect for Mike Bohn," George said. "It's now my responsibility to take this university and athletic department to the next level."

He added that his biggest challenge will be fundraising, which ultimately was Bohn's downfall.

"I've got to be out in front in our fundraising," George said. "I'm excited about that. I think it's about relationships and people believing in what you're doing."

Said new CU football coach Mike MacIntyre: "He's had to work in a lot of different situations. I'm excited about his fundraising background and how he's been able to do that and run in those

circles with different CEOs."

George was at his alma mater, the University of Illinois, from 1983-87 as recruiting coordinator before joining the Buffs' staff and working with former coach Bill McCartney.

"I learned a lot from Coach Mac. I was young," said George, who played football for four seasons at Illinois before graduating in 1982. "He taught me the importance of family. He had tremendous discipline. I have a tremendous amount of respect for Mac."

George, whose oldest daughter was born in Boulder, left CU in 1991 to become associate athletic director at Vanderbilt, where he stayed until 1998.

From 1998-2003, George was CEO of the Fore!Kids Foundation, which is a nonprofit organization that raises money for children's charities via golf-related events. The CU athletic department's annual golf event, the Casotti Classic, is Thursday at Pelican Lakes Golf Club in Windsor.

**ESPN.com:** Pac-12[\[Print without images\]](#)

Wednesday, July 17, 2013

Colorado taps Rick George as AD

By Ted Miller

Colorado has hired [Texas Rangers](#) president of business operations Rick George to be its next athletic director, [it was announced Wednesday](#).

George takes over for Mike Bohn, who was forced to resign in May. George's first day at Colorado will be August 12.

While this seems like an out-of-the-box hire -- a major league baseball executive? -- George has plenty of college experience and knows Colorado. In fact, he spent most of his 30-year career at the collegiate level, including serving as assistant athletic director of football operations at Colorado from 1987-91.

Any Buffs fans remember that period of Colorado football? A couple of 11-1 seasons? A split national title? Guessing that helped get George an offer.

And, yes, this decision is about money -- how to raise it and make it. That, apparently, was a concern with Bohn. Colorado is well behind most Pac-12 schools in terms of facilities and it needs to raise money to pay for plans to build new ones.

"Rick's financial and management acumen, his networking and relationship development skills, and his enthusiasm, work ethic and principled leadership all make him the ideal leader for CU athletics at this important and challenging moment in our history," said Colorado chancellor Philip DiStefano in a statement.

From the news release:

George has served as COO of the Rangers since 2010 and recently as the president of business operations, and was a member of the front office staff for the team's first-ever American League championship that year and its second in 2011. Prior to that, he served as executive vice president and chief of operations for the PGA Tour from June 2008 until joining the Rangers. While with the Tour, he worked with the corporate marketing department in renewing sponsorships and creating new events. He also oversaw the Tournament Business Affairs division that worked with Tournaments to increase tournament revenue.

He also worked for the PGA Tour as president of the Champions Tour from 2003-08, where he increased revenues and sponsorships. From 1998-2003, George served as President and CEO of the Fore!Kids Foundation, a 501c3 organization that raised money for children's charities via golf-related events, where he led re-branding and organizational efforts that resulted in increases in charitable giving to the Foundation.

At the collegiate level, George has worked in three major conferences (Big Ten, Big Eight, Southeastern) in football operations, beginning with the University of Illinois (where he was a four-year starter in football and a 1982 graduate) as football recruiting coordinator (1983-87).

At CU (1987-91) he served as assistant athletic director for football operations and is credited with building the talent base that made the Buffaloes one of the most successful college programs in America throughout the 1990s. At Vanderbilt University (1991-98), he also served as associate athletic director for external operations.

CU Interim Athletic Director Ceal Barry, who chaired the athletic director search committee, said George's wide experience in managing finances, overseeing revenue growth and leading fundraising, capped off by his personal reputation and past record of success at CU-Boulder and at two other major universities, all combined to make him the clear front-runner in the search.

George has agreed to a five-year contract. He will report to DiStefano through the offices of Senior Vice Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer Kelly Fox.

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Star-Telegram

Rangers notes: Executive Rick George resigns to become AD at Colorado

Posted Wednesday, Jul. 17, 2013

BY DREW DAVISON

ddavison@star-telegram.com

Rick George is resigning from his post as Texas Rangers president of business operations to become the athletic director at the University of Colorado, the team announced Wednesday.

Rangers CEO Nolan Ryan thanked and wished George well in a statement.

"We appreciate his many contributions the past few years, particularly his efforts to help us increase revenues and attendance to record levels," Ryan said. "We have a deep, experienced team in place on the business operations side that is prepared to maintain our strong performance while we look for Rick's successor."

George was hired by former CEO Chuck Greenberg in October 2010 as chief operating officer. Greenberg resigned in March 2011, but George stayed with the team and was promoted to president of business operations in March this year.

But George had shown interest in returning to college athletics. He was one of six finalists for the athletic director job at Ole Miss in early 2012, so it's no surprise he took the job at Colorado.

George worked at Colorado from 1987-91 as an assistant athletic director in football operations. He has also worked at Vanderbilt and the University of Illinois, his alma mater. Before joining the Rangers, George was an executive with the PGA Tour.

"The Rangers have not only a great team on the field, but also a great team in the front office under Nolan Ryan's leadership," George said in a statement. "I will cherish this experience and the lasting friendships that I have made in my time with the Rangers."

George's first day at Colorado will be Aug. 12.

Briefly

- Right-hander Colby Lewis began another rehab assignment Wednesday with Double A Frisco, as he continues to recover from flexor tendon surgery in his right elbow. Lewis allowed four runs on four hits with one walk and one strikeout over 2 2/3 innings. He threw 45 pitches, 27 for strikes, giving up a two-run homer on his final pitch of the night.
- Left-hander Brad Mills has left the Rangers organization to pitch in Japan. He spent all season at Triple A Round Rock, going 7-5 with a 3.87 ERA.

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