

New director of player development excited to join strong program

By Brian Howell Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

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Sean Kearney never expected he would land in Boulder, but he is excited to be working with the Colorado men's basketball team.

Earlier this week, Kearney started his new job as the director of player development for the Buffaloes.

"What a completely different atmosphere for me," Kearney said. "I'm a guy who grew up in the Northeast and I have spent a considerable amount of time in the Midwest, but have never really been through here for any amount of time."

With a strong desire to get back into the college basketball world, however, Kearney couldn't pass up to the opportunity to work with CU head coach Tad Boyle and his assistants.

"I wanted to get back with good people and get back within a good program," Kearney said. "I think I've hit a grand slam with this opportunity."

CU is coming off of back-to-back NCAA Tournament appearances and most pundits believe the Buffs will be a Top 25 team this coming season.

Kearney has 26 years of experience in college basketball, most recently as the head coach at the College of the Holy Cross during the 2009-10 season. He was let go after that one season and has been looking to get back into coaching ever since.

Prior to his stint at Holy Cross, Kearney was the associate head coach at Notre Dame for nine years, from 2000-09. Before that, he was at Delaware for nine seasons. He has also worked as an assistant at Northwestern for three seasons and as a volunteer assistant at Providence for one season under Rick Pitino.

Kearney joins a coaching staff that has been together for the past three seasons. Boyle and assistants Jean Prioleau and Mike Rohn have several years of experience together at other schools, too. Kearney is replacing Tom Abatemarco, who left in June to become an assistant at Loyola Marymount.

Before this summer, Kearney didn't know Boyle, but a few common bonds in the coaching fraternity got them connected.

Because he is new to the program, Kearney said, "I think one thing that I can bring to them is a fresh set of eyes, to just give them a different perspective sometimes."

Kearney has received a few different perspectives on the game during the past three years, since leaving Holy Cross. He has done color analysis for radio and TV broadcasts; part-time work evaluating officials for the Big Ten; and has spent time visiting basketball practices at

several college and NBA teams.

"I think that absolutely has made me a better coach," he said of those experiences.

At CU, Kearney will be on the sidelines during game days, but will not coach during practices. He will be responsible for a lot of behind-the-scenes work, he said, including putting together future schedules and helping the players with academics.

He said he will be like a utility player in baseball.

"I'll plug myself in wherever I might be able to help," he said.

Eventually, Kearney wants to get back into coaching on a full-time basis. He's hoping this job will lead him to that.

"This is an avenue for me to get back on the sideline," he said.

For now, though, he is excited to be involved with a college basketball team again, and said he'll put all of his energy into helping the Buffaloes succeed.

"I want to give great effort and have great success," he said.

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