



# Bohn mulling CU football ticket prices

## Some CU football prices may go up, others could go down

By Kyle Ringo

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The Colorado football program hasn't produced a winning record for three years, but that might not prevent a ticket price increase next season in at least some areas of Folsom Field.

Athletic director Mike Bohn said ticket prices are far from finalized and might not be increased at all, but the possibility will be discussed as his department tackles the challenge of sustaining growth in fundraising and maintaining season-ticket sales during a serious economic downturn.

Bohn said he recognizes times are tough for individuals, families and businesses and his department will explore many other options for generating revenue before increasing the cost of attending games at Folsom Field across the board.

He said he recently spent 14 hours of one day in Denver for 15 different meetings, most of which were geared toward fundraising and sales. Bohn said it's possible some ticket prices could go down as the department searches for the best ways to serve loyal customers, while also maintaining revenue.

"I wouldn't define it as a ticket price increase, I would define it as exploring our pricing structure to adjust for these times and to ensure that we have a solution for virtually every fan regardless of their position," he said.

Bohn said CU football ticket prices haven't been changed for six years.

The CU athletic department has made progress in the past three years in getting its bottom line in order, but it remains vulnerable and is still saddled with debt. Most of an \$8 million loan from the campus and the CU System in 2006 is still outstanding and no other program outside of football contributes significantly to revenue production.

The truth is CU athletics is no different from every other business or enterprise in times like these. The entire department runs mostly on ticket sales and donations and when fans don't have the money to spend, it leads to leaner times throughout the department.

"Those are key pieces of our efforts at this time is managing those relationships across the board from the single-ticket buyer to the season-ticket buyer to the corporate buyer to the major donor," Bohn said.

The fact that 10 of 12 football games were played on national television or to split-national audiences will provide some additional income through the Big 12 Conference agreement for distributing television revenue. Bohn said he expects another similar year next year in terms of the number of games televised to wide audiences.

The conference having two teams in Bowl Championship Series games next month also should help the department with an estimate of \$250,000 in additional revenue.

Bohn and his staff were encouraged this year by an increase in season-ticket sales, club seat sales and a sellout season in luxury suites, despite insecurity in the economy. The department reported in October 22,603 season tickets sold this year, an increase of 1,369 from last season. But sustaining that growth could be difficult in the new year, especially if the economy continues to decline.

"It does make it more challenging, but, yet, it forces us to be more efficient and more creative and it forces us to think outside the box in order to maintain our partnerships," Bohn said. "So in some ways we get stronger."

Bohn said he is always encouraging his staff to generate new ideas and he welcomes them from outside the department as well.

He said there is positive news on the horizon with announcements pending on several significant contributions.

"We want them to do well so they can feel good about supporting CU," Bohn said. "I think they would like us to do well because when the athletic department does well, the university does well and the community does well."

"We're really working hard to try to find ways to enhance our position in the marketplace for people to understand that a viable athletic program is a good investment in the community."



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