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## CU, CSU athletic directors near fiscal finish line

By Natalie Meisler  
The Denver Post

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A key season ends Tuesday, and it's the one facet of any athletic department where a .500 record is cause for joy — and relief.

Colorado athletic director Mike Bohn and Colorado State counterpart Paul Kowalczyk expect to finish at par or slightly better when the fiscal year ends Tuesday. That's no small feat given the national economic climate and spiraling tuition hikes.

"We are in and staying with our commitment to keep the budget balanced," Bohn said Friday of an estimated \$45 million operation.

Likewise, Kowalczyk said last week: "We're going to be fine, break even or a little better."

The Mountain West Conference distribution helped CSU, which picked up \$580,000 from Utah's Bowl Championship Series game. MWC

distribution has changed since 2004 as part of revenue sharing with other nonqualifying BCS conferences. If there are no representatives, there's a flat BCS payout to each conference.

"We budget for the worst-case scenario," Kowalczyk said of BCS payouts.

Bohn said CU hit most of its revenue targets before the brunt of the economic crisis hit last fall.

CSU pared back \$160,000 for the upcoming year, with reductions coming in game management and marketing.

Bohn didn't have the exact reduction figure but said there will be cutbacks in media guides as well as not filling some personnel vacancies.

Both athletic directors have concerns for the coming fiscal year.

"I'm very nervous about us hitting our revenue projections in tickets sales, specifically in marketing and development," Kowalczyk said. "We can't count on the same kind of success in the conference where we're going to see large additional amounts of money come in."

Although CSU has three strong football draws in Air Force, Wyoming and Utah, Kowalczyk worries that a tough start in the MWC race might dampen enthusiasm later in the season.

**CSU scheduling.**

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Kowalczyk said the Rams' open date in 2012 will be taken by a Division I-AA team, and the next open date is 2015. There are no teams scheduled from automatic-qualifying BCS conferences except the CU series.

Kowalczyk said the MWC's continued early-season presence in the football polls would boost CSU's profile with some victories over Utah, Texas Christian and Brigham Young.

Rams football coach Steve Fairchild said he wants to get the CU-CSU series permanently extended (in Denver) before worrying about any other nonconference opponents.

"As much as our goal is a BCS bowl, realistically we're not there yet and we have to continue to rebuild this program," Kowalczyk said. "Steve and I will reassess scheduling at some point."

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