



# Foster had feeling he'd be headed to Colorado

## New Buffs outside linebackers coach has strong ties to Hawkins

By Kyle Ringo  
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BOULDER, Colo. — Coach Dan Hawkins' cell phone rang one night in mid-April as he and his wife, Misti, played host in their home to Hawkins' longtime mentor and friend Bob Foster and his wife, Carol.

An official from the University of Oregon was on the other end wanting permission for the school to interview Hawkins' offensive coordinator, Mark Helfrich, for the same position with the Ducks.

The look in Hawkins' eyes told Foster all he needed to know. The request didn't come for several more weeks, but Foster knew he would be spending the 2009 season in Boulder as a member of the Colorado staff.

"In the back of my mind I started thinking, 'He is going to think of a way to get me back there,'" Foster said. "When the phone rang, he just came right out and said, 'Hey coach. Here it is.' I had already been thinking about it because I just had the feeling."

When Helfrich left for Oregon following spring practices, it left Hawkins in the uncomfortable position of having to replace an assistant very late in the offseason. Instead of settling for a stranger who might be a little wet behind the ears, Hawkins turned to his old friend.

Foster is coming out of retirement for the fifth time to coach outside linebackers for Hawkins, whom he has known for nearly 30 years. He previously "unretired" to coach at Oregon and Cal and to serve as an advisor to Hawkins in the mid 1990s when Hawkins was head coach at Willamette.

Foster initially agreed to coach in Boulder for just this season. He is scheduled to be replaced on the staff next year by new wide receivers coach Ashley Ambrose. But Foster said he knows better than to put a strict timetable on how long he will coach with Hawkins. His experience has taught him that situations change and evolve and what seems appropriate now, can be totally different six months from now.

So while he plans to coach the Buffs for just one season, he's leaving the door open to the possibility it could be more.

Foster said he will come to Boulder on June 18 and stay until July Fourth. Then he will return to CU on July 20 and plans to be with the program "until we finish the bowl season."

Foster and Hawkins met when Hawkins was a gritty fullback filled with desire in the early 1980s at Cal-Davis and Foster was the team's linebackers coach.

"He was always a guy I wished I had on the defense," Foster said. "He was one of those guys, who was very coachable. The kind of guy you would want on your team as a head coach or a defensive coordinator because he is the kind of guy who is such a positive person and thinks of things in such a positive way."

Foster said he and Hawkins developed a mutual respect for each other as coach and player even though they were never in the same meeting rooms or even on the same side of the ball. He said Hawkins kept in touch with him over the years and they eventually became great friends.

Foster said he misses the energy of the young players in football, and that is one draw that convinced him to come out of retirement one more time. But the primary reason was his desire to help Hawkins.

"He's one of the special guys I've coached over the years," Foster said. "He means so much more to our profession than just winning and losing."

Foster has served as a head coach at Cal-Davis and in numerous assistant coaching positions, including defensive coordinator at Oregon in 1998-99. Foster also previously coached alongside new offensive coordinator Eric Kiesau, when he twice came out of retirement earlier this decade to coach linebackers at Cal.

He brings an excellent track record with him to Boulder, one that should be a ray of hope to CU fans hoping for the first winning season in Hawkins' tenure.

"He has never had a losing record and is a real quality human being who will be a major force for Colorado football on and off the field," Hawkins said of Foster earlier this month.

Foster said he doesn't know yet what roles he will fill in the program beyond coaching outside linebackers such as B.J. Beatty and Doug Rippy. He won't participate in off-campus recruiting, but will help welcome recruits to campus. He said he hopes his extensive network of contacts and his reputation will help bring more talent to CU.

"Hopefully, just the fact that I'm going there will help some," he said.

## **Hawkins leaves**

## **BSU program**

Drew Hawkins, son of CU head coach Dan Hawkins, has left the Boise State program because of a history of concussions, the school announced Wednesday.

Hawkins, who walked on at BSU as a quarterback last fall, was scheduled to make the move to wide receiver next fall.

According to a BSU press release, Hawkins sustained his latest concussion in a recreational softball game.



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