

AUG 31 2011

Los Angeles Times

A version of this story ran in various outlets throughout the country.

Texas A&M denies it sent withdrawal letter

August 30, 2011, 8:03 a.m.

Texas A&M is denying that it has notified the Big 12 of its decision to leave the conference.

In a statement Tuesday, university spokesman Jason Cook said: "As of this morning, Texas A&M has not submitted a letter of withdrawal from the Big 12 Conference."

Cook, the school's chief communications officer, declined further comment and it wasn't clear if his statement meant the university wouldn't be sending a letter in the future.

On Monday night, The New York Times reported that Texas A&M president R. Bowen Loftin sent a letter to Big 12 board chairman Brady Deaton, president of the University of Missouri, saying the Aggies would formally withdraw from the conference.

The report said an announcement was likely to come Tuesday.

The school's potential departure was discussed during a conference call Saturday between the Big 12 board of directors, according to a report in the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, which quoted a league source as saying he "wouldn't be surprised" to see Texas A&M take steps to join the SEC soon.

However, the Times reported Monday that there are two stumbling blocks for the Aggies to join the SEC. One is the school's exit fee from the Big 12, which has not been negotiated and could be upwards of \$15 million. The other is that nine of the 12 SEC school presidents would have to vote to add the Aggies become a member of the conference.

Texas A&M notified the Big 12 last Thursday that it was exploring options to join another conference, but would do so only in accordance with the conference's bylaws and with a promise that the school would support the Big 12's efforts to seek a new member.

Talk of expansion in the SEC is nothing new. There were reports last summer as well that Texas A&M was courted by the top college football conference in the country.

The Big 12 is already down to 10 teams after Nebraska and Colorado departed for other conferences.



Texas A&M's departure a matter of dispute

Associated Press Tuesday, August 30, 2011

The New York Times reported last night that Texas A&M has notified the Big 12 it will withdraw from the conference, but an A&M spokesman and Missouri Chancellor Brady Deaton denied the accuracy of that report.

The New York Times said in a story posted on its website that Texas A&M President R. Bowen Loftin sent a letter to Big 12 board chairman Deaton to inform the league it was leaving. The report cited two unidentified college officials with direct knowledge of the decision. However, Deaton said this morning during an interview with KFRU radio in Columbia that he had received no letter, and Texas A&M spokesman Jason Cook said no letter was sent.

The author of the story, Pete Thamel, posted on Twitter this morning that he was misinformed about the letter but that Loftin called Deaton last night and informed him over the phone about Texas A&M's plans to withdraw.

Texas A&M's departure would cast doubt on the future of the Big 12 and could lead to more major changes to college athletics.

The university said earlier yesterday it had received a letter from Big 12 Commissioner Dan Beebe outlining the withdrawal procedure should the Aggies decide to leave the league.

Cook said the letter "outlines the withdrawal procedures according to the financial provisions of the Big 12 bylaws and mutual waivers of legal claims." He wouldn't provide any other details of the letter or comment on what A&M's next step might be.

The Aggies are interested in joining the Southeastern Conference and the dueling letters come less than a week after they formally told Beebe they are exploring their options and asked for the conference to outline the process if they decide to leave. The league's board of directors addressed the possible departure of the Aggies this weekend.

"I certainly appreciate the discussion among the Big 12 presidents/chancellors and the expression of their desire for Texas A&M to remain in the conference," Loftin said in a statement issued before The New York Times report. "We all agree that Texas A&M is an extremely valuable institution; thus, it is incumbent upon me, as the president of the university, to ensure that we are in a position to enhance our national visibility and future financial opportunity."

Loftin added this is a "complex and long-term decision," but "it is not our intent to prolong our conference exploration for an extended period of time." **STORY CONTINUES...**



ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

SMU wants spot in Big 12

Associated Press | Posted: Wednesday, August 31, 2011 12:05 am

MU mention page 2

COLLEGE STATION, Texas • Texas A&M can't seem to wait to get out of the Big 12 Conference. SMU would like nothing more than to join the league.

Oddly, No. 8 Texas A&M hosts the Mustangs on Sunday in the season opener, and the usual questions around a team's first game have been overshadowed by a second straight year of conference realignment.

SMU, which currently plays in Conference USA, has been the only school to publicly campaign for an invitation into the Big 12 if the Aggies leave as expected.

"I think we add stability to an (automatic qualifier) BCS conference, especially in our region," SMU athletics director Steve Orsini said. "Our goal is to resurrect ourselves."

Orsini says if SMU were to replace A&M in the Big 12, the conference would gain a footprint in another major media market (Dallas) and bring back some regional matchups that were lost when the Southwest Conference ended.

Unlike last year, when Nebraska, Colorado and others were all relatively secretive about switching conferences, Texas A&M President R. Bowen Loftin came right out and said last week that the Aggies are exploring their options and are interested specifically in the Southeastern Conference. The SEC reaffirmed its 12-school membership but kept the door open.

Joining the Big 12 would be a big step for SMU, which has taken years to shed its reputation stemming from the 1980s pay-for-play scandal that resulted in the NCAA's only "death penalty."

The NCAA canceled SMU's 1987 football season, and the school decided not to play in 1988, either. The Mustangs posted only one winning record over the next 20 years and didn't reach

another bowl game until 2009. The sanction is believed to have played a part in the breakup and eventual dissolution of the Southwest Conference.

Missouri Chancellor Brady Deaton, who serves as the chairman of the Big 12 board, said Tuesday that the group has formed a committee to look at possible replacements but also could address the possibility of expanding the conference even if Texas A&M stays put. Deaton said the Big 12 board has not received notification that the Aggies plan to leave.

The Aggies received a letter from Big 12 Commissioner Dan Beebe on Monday outlining the withdrawal procedure, including "financial provisions," if they go. A departure by the Aggies could jeopardize the Big 12, which is down to 10 teams after Nebraska (Big Ten) and Colorado (Pac-12) left the league in July. Loftin has said the Aggies would consider how their departure would impact the future of the Big 12 before any decision is made.

The Big 12 agreed to a 13-year television deal with Fox Sports in April worth more than \$1 billion. The contract could be voided if the Aggies leave the conference, which could lead to legal issues for Texas A&M and its new league.

"The Big 12 remains a strong conference with a very effective media contract in place," Deaton said in a statement Tuesday.



KERBER – “The Show Me State” Needs To Go

Chris Kerber KMOX August 30, 2011 11:29 AM

I'd like to propose a change in our state slogan. With all due respect to those that think the “Show Me State” is a good one, the problem is too many people take it too literally. The new slogan doesn't even need to be catchy. How about the “Follow Us State,” the “We'll Lead State,” or the “Ahead of the Game State”. I don't care, so long as we can get rid of the slow minded, take your time, have to see it first approach our current slogan demands.

The first group to benefit from the new Slogan will be the University of Missouri Athletic Department. It's time that the department under Mike Alden take a visionary approach to how it runs it's athletics and a far less reactionary one. It does not take a mind reader to realize that Mike Anderson had zero desire to be a long-term coach at Missouri. I think wanting to talk to other schools a couple of years in a row was a clue. After being used by Matt Painter to secure a better situation at Purdue, the Tigers had no where to go but a losing program at Miami. If Matt Painter was the goal, then Missouri needed to make sure the offer was one he could not turn down. It needed to be one Purdue could not touch. Now the fall back on Haith decision is under fire because of the NCAA Miami investigation.

Now Missouri finds itself trying to hang on to an uncertain Big 12. They have let Texas run with their demands and now Texas A&M has said enough. Texas, Texas A&M, Nebraska, and even Colorado took their best interest to heart and reacted. The Big 12 hedged their bets that the new TV contract would suffice everyone and that bet lost. What does Missouri do? Will they put their own interest first or try to keep the best interest of the conference in mind and see what happens? Is it worth trying to keep the Big 12 in tact if A&M leaves? If there is even a remote chance Missouri can find it's way into the Big 10 or SEC, should they hedge their bet that way and go for the ultimate payoff? Who knows?

Here's what I do know. Business as usual is not good enough anymore. The Missouri Tigers need a more selfish approach to their future. They need a more aggressive approach towards their fellow Big 12 members. Missouri needs to act like they belong in the big game and deserve the same attention Nebraska, Texas A&M, and others are receiving. It may start with marketing. It may start with an image adjustment. But it definitely starts with a philosophical adjustment. Enough with waiting to see what others are going to do. Enough with having to react once that has happened. Enough with waiting to be “Shown”.

We may have the “Show Me State” as a state slogan, but that does not mean we need to use it as a guide. Mike Alden and the University of Missouri need to lead. They need to be the ahead of the process, and they need vision. Keep the “Show Me State” on license plates if you want. Just let the “Visionary State” be the guide.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

COMMENT: Even without Big 12, Missouri will find a home

By Harry Plumer

August 30, 2011 | 6:47 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — Let's start with the one thing that seems inevitable: Texas A&M is leaving the Big 12 Conference.

Its relationship with the SEC is beyond the "Let me buy you a drink," stage. They've been on the dance floor for a while and it appears the two are going to be going home together very soon. The Oct. 29 meeting in College Station between Missouri and Texas A&M will be the pair's last Big 12 get-together.

Even though Texas A&M is denying reports that it sent a letter to the Big 12 stating its intentions to leave the conference, Aggies football coach Mike Sherman all but admitted to the planned departure. On Monday's Big 12 teleconference, he answered a question about conference realignment by saying, "We have a bunch of seniors that will never in play in that conference."

The Aggies have had enough of their relationship with Texas. The Longhorn Network pushed them far enough. They will graze in what they perceive as greener pastures.

That leaves the obvious question: What happens next, both to Missouri and the Big 12 as a whole?

The people who should have the answers aren't talking, at least not much.

Brady Deaton, MU Chancellor and President of the Big 12 Board of Directors, declined to speak Tuesday, but the MU News Bureau released a statement on his behalf, trotting out what has become the Big 12 party line.

"The Big 12 Board formed a special committee to discuss schools that may be considered in the future to join the Big 12 in the event Texas A&M leaves the conference or if further

expansion is desirable even if Texas A&M stays in the conference," a part of the release read. "The Big 12 is poised to act aggressively to assure a strong Big 12 for the future."

Missouri Athletics Director Mike Alden referred all comments to the Big 12, which referred all comments to a one-sentence statement from Commissioner Dan Beebe that boiled down to "We're working on it."

Another thing no one seems to want to comment on is what happens to the reported \$1 billion TV contract between the Big 12 and Fox when Texas A&M bolts. This was the contract signed in April that was supposed to "save the Big 12."

According to Glenn Wong of the University of Massachusetts, an expert in media contract law, it's likely that a contract like this one contains a clause allowing Fox to renegotiate their terms if a league giant like Texas A&M leaves. But last year, when Nebraska and Colorado left the league, both Fox and ESPN had the opportunity to take a chunk of money out of their Big 12 deals, and both elected not to do so.

Both the Big 12 and Fox declined requests from the Missourian to view the contract, citing confidential terms. Both organizations also declined comment.

The short answer, though, is that whatever actions are taken, Missouri is going to be just fine.

But that still leaves us to wonder what the next step in this process will be. Texas A&M makes 13 teams in the SEC, a mathematically unfriendly number for scheduling purposes. One can only think that the league will soon be in search of school No. 14. Rumored 14th teams such as Florida State and Clemson are all in states that already have SEC schools, something the New York Times is reporting that the league doesn't like.

With the No. 21 (St. Louis) and 31 (Kansas City) largest media markets in the nation, Missouri opens up a whole new area to the SEC's geographic footprint, and puts the conference in more than 2 million new homes. Even if Missouri isn't high on the list for No. 14, it would have to be strongly considered if the conference ever went to, say, 16 teams.

Why would the SEC do that, you ask? Because of Larry Scott, commissioner of the Pac-12, who is a man who has proven willing to buck tradition to create a business opportunity.

With his progressive nature, Scott is the commissioner least likely to fear the repercussions of becoming the first 16-team super conference. In a weakened Big 12, Oklahoma and Oklahoma State would be likely first targets for Scott. Others would follow. Missouri could be one of those others.

Without a doubt though, if and when Scott makes his move, the Big Ten and SEC would have to react. They would have to, just to keep pace.

Then, perhaps, Missouri gets what it wanted from the beginning: An invitation from the Big Ten. Or maybe it ends up in the SEC as its 15th or 16th team.

Then again, maybe the Big 12 continues to exist. But what happens if and when Fox decides to renegotiate the TV contract will have an impact on the league.

Mike Alden has bills to pay. If the TV money decreases enough in a Aggie-less agreement to the point where Alden can't pay those bills, Missouri, as well as other Big 12 schools, are going to have a problem on their hands. Maybe then Alden picks up the phone and calls Scott, the SEC or the Big Ten and pleads his case.

But there's a chance, some might even call it a good chance, that the Big 12 does remain together as a league. As CBSSports' Dennis Dodd pointed out recently, as long as the league has Texas and Oklahoma, it can survive. "We are poised to move aggressively" has become the league's mantra. Notre Dame or Arkansas certainly won't step in to replace Texas A&M, but BYU, Air Force and Houston could be legitimate options.

Either way, though, those fears we all heard last year about Missouri being relegated to relative obscurity in the Mountain West or even the Big East are unfounded this time around.

It won't be instant, and because it's a slow process, people will panic. People will cry, "Mike Alden, Brady Deaton, why are you sitting there, letting this all happen? Do something!"

The truth is there isn't a whole lot for either of them to do. Missouri isn't anyone's first option. Texas A&M brought the Big 12 more than twice as much revenue from 2003-2009 than Missouri did. Texas Tech even brought in more cash than Missouri over that period.

But because of the TV markets, Missouri isn't anyone's worst option either.

However this all shakes out, Tiger fans should take solace. The question is not whether Missouri will find a home in a BCS conference, but which BCS conference it will be.



The Tribune's View
Alden on Haith
'Frustrating'

By Henry J. Waters III

Columbia Daily Tribune Tuesday, August 30, 2011

The same might be said about the reaction of most fans to allegations that new University of Missouri head basketball Coach Frank Haith approved an improper payment to a player at his former school, the University of Miami.

Haith says he had no relationship with the man accused of handing over the money, but subsequent reports revealed photos of the two together, and the booster's phone records show some 85 shared phone or text messages.

MU basketball spokesman Dave Reiter was quoted as saying Haith denied any relationship, raising questions about whether the coach lied to MU athletic department officials.

Obviously Haith knew the booster from Miami, but that does not mean he "approved" the payment to the player or even knew about it. Alden gives his new coach the benefit of doubt but urges the NCAA to hurry its investigation so basketball business at MU can get back on track.

"It's frustrating," MU Athletic Director Mike Alden says.

So far Alden's stance is correct. Even if the Miami booster did give money to the player, Haith might not have known about it. Any coach with half a brain today would hogtie a rogue booster to a bedpost rather than "approve" a cash payment to a player, as the Miami story alleges. But the NCAA tends to find fault with institutions and coaches who do not exercise control over rule-breaking of this type, meaning just because Haith might not have known about the illegal activity does not mean he and his former institution will escape censure. This requirement that officials in charge must somehow pre-empt unknown illegal initiatives by independent supporters is one of the most difficult NCAA enforcement challenges. Whether Haith and Miami did enough presumably will be the gist of the investigation there.

If the situation in Miami does bring some sort of NCAA disapproval, what might that mean for the future of Haith and MU basketball? So far, Alden clearly wants Haith to weather the storm, but it's likely to depend on the credibility of the coach's denial. The NCAA is not likely to comment on whether Frank Haith told the truth to MU athletic officials about the incident. It will be up to MU to decide whether Haith has the necessary credibility to continue, an extra layer of proof beyond his already tough threshold regarding the ability of a coach with a losing record to be successful.

Even so, Haith was making an encouraging start here at Mizzou. Unless clear proof emerges he was complicit in an illegal payment to a player at Miami, he deserves to continue his fledgling career in Columbia. A bit of time will be necessary to clarify the situation. The quicker, the better.

St. Louis Business Journal

Are two CEOs better than one?

St. Louis Business Journal - by Kelsey Volkmann

Date: Tuesday, August 30, 2011, 2:18pm CDT

A University of Missouri researcher has found that more companies are hiring co-CEOs.

Stephen Ferris, professor and director of the Financial Research Institute in the University of Missouri Trulaske College of Business, said Tuesday he identified 111 publicly traded companies featuring a co-CEO leadership structure between 1998 and 2008, including Bed, Bath & Beyond , American Eagle Outfitters and Blackberry maker Research in Motion (although RIM has come under fire for letting its co-founders share the CEO title and the two leaders reportedly fight openly throughout the office).

In St. Louis, \$4.4 billion food giant Ralcorp is led by co-CEOs **Kevin Hunt** and David Skarie. Co-CEOs **Ron Krueger** and **James Hoffmeister** lead Wehrenberg Theatres, and co-CEOs **Rick Bennet** and **Howard Brodsky** top CCA Global Partners , the \$1.2 billion parent of flooring, lighting, mortgage banking and cycling companies.

Ferris said co-CEOs are effective in corporations that have recently merged because the CEOs help ease the culture clash. The arrangement also is ideal in a situation where a CEO has few natural checks, such as a weak board of directors or few institutional creditors that provide oversight and guard against improper or ineffective executive behavior, he said.

“Americans have long championed captains and titans of industry, but this research shows that having two corporate leaders can work,” he said.

Ferris found that on average, co-CEOs stayed in their positions 4.5 years, compared with an average 6-year tenure of solitary CEOs.

Co-CEOs also do not cost as much, individually, as a solitary CEO. Ferris found combined median cash compensation for one pair of co-CEOs to be slightly lower than the median cash compensation for two solitary CEOs. The largest change comes in stock grants and options; the median co-CEO team received 35.7 percent of the options of just one solitary CEO.

What do you think? Are two corporate heads better than or is this a job best performed solo?



MU lands in top half of new rankings

UM still leery of methodologies.

By Janese Silvey

Columbia Daily Tribune Tuesday, August 30, 2011

The University of Missouri ranks in the top half of an annual college guide that aims to provide an alternative to the more popular U.S. News & World Report's Best Colleges list.

The Washington Monthly released the rankings yesterday in its September/October issue. Of 258 national universities, MU landed in the 113 spot, one notch lower than Washington University in St. Louis but higher than rival University of Kansas, which came in at 152.

Washington Monthly touts its rankings as a system based not on what a school is doing for a student but rather what a university does for the country.

The magazine takes into account a university's ability to recruit and graduate low-income students, award doctorates, especially in science and engineering, conduct research and promote community service. The magazine calls its college guide "our answer to ratings like U.S. News & World Report, which rely on easily manipulated measures of wealth, exclusivity and prestige to determine college quality."

U.S. News & World Report's annual Best Colleges guide — due out Sept. 13 — generally is dismissed by UM System leaders because the rankings are largely based on peer reviews. Last year, in addition to asking college presidents, deans and provosts to rank schools, the magazine also surveyed high school counselors.

MU isn't quick to embrace any ranking system, spokesman Christian Basi said. Not only do measurements change from year to year, it's also tough to compare schools that have different missions. For instance, he said, Washington University scored worse on Washington Monthly's report than MU in graduating low-income students, but that is because the two institutions serve different populations.

"We know that students use these rankings and others as a starting point. However, based on one-on-one conversations with students, we also know that they focus on the strength of an academic program when choosing a school and a major," Basi said.

It's unlikely any type of external rankings will be used if the state adopts a performance funding model for higher education. Gov. Jay Nixon last week unveiled a plan to reward with extra funding universities that meet certain goals, including having students perform well on professional exams.

Nikki Krawitz, vice president of finance for the UM System, serves on the task force charged with studying performance funding. She said the system will use “clearly recognizable output measures” tied to specific state goals, such as graduation rates and affordability.

Washington Monthly’s list of the top universities ranked the Missouri University of Science & Technology in Rolla 188, and UM-St. Louis and UM-Kansas City ranked 240 and 245, respectively. California schools captured the top five spots, with the University of California-San Diego taking No. 1.