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## WSU football goes country

PULLMAN, Wash. (AP) — The Cougars are going country.

Washington State is kicking off a country and western-themed ad campaign aimed at attracting more Spokane fans to home football games.

The campaign comes in response to worries the school could lose its Pacific-10 Conference affiliation if attendance doesn't improve at 37,600-seat Martin Stadium, athletic director Jim Livengood said.

The anchor of the campaign is a twangy country song similar to the one Hank Williams Jr. sings to open ABC-TV's *Monday Night Football*. It also includes a series of television, radio and billboard messages.

"It's going to be dynamite," Livengood said. Attendance at home games in recent years has averaged in the low- to mid-20,000s.

The problem became apparent last season, when only 16,000 fans showed up to watch the 6-2 Cougars play Arizona State in a game that had Rose Bowl implications.

A survey of the Spokane area by research and marketing firms found that most casual fans held the Washington State football team in high regard, but cited the inconvenience of the 90-mile drive to Pullman on a curving two-lane highway.

The Cougars had played some games each season at Joe Albi Stadium in Spokane for more than 30 years, but the last game there was against UNLV in 1983. Martin Stadium was expanded from 27,600 to 39,600 seats in 1979, but the Cougars continued to play one or two games a season at Joe Albi for the next four years. The biggest attendance at Joe Albi was 37,750 against UCLA in 1977.

Livengood said the new advertising campaign will be tied to the country-western theme song and emphasize the excitement of "Game Day on the Palouse," a reference to the Palouse region of south-

**'First, we have to sell people on the theme of "Hey, you need to drive to Pullman and see your hometown team — the Washington State Cougars."'**

— Jim Livengood,  
Cougars athletic director

east Washington.

"First, we have to sell people on the theme of 'Hey, you need to drive to Pullman and see your hometown team — the Washington State Cougars — play Pac-10 football,'" Livengood said. "And then we have to provide for that experience."

Athletic department marketers have added post-game band concerts and barbecues, but that has not kept people from staying away from Martin Stadium in droves the past two years.

In addition to the advertising campaign, athletic officials are upgrading a toll-free telephone system and compiling a list of single-game ticket buyers in hopes of persuading them to attend more.

The Cougars marketers are incorporating ideas gleaned from comparisons with similarly sized schools in rural locations that are about the same distance from larger metropolitan areas.

"We're not Nebraska, where we own the whole state," said Tom Stebbins, the Cougars' marketing director. "The mountains make it an east-west thing here in Washington and we just need to own the east. There's really no magical answer. We just need to roll up our sleeves and get to work."

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## Sophomore forward leaves UA

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP) — Etdrick Bohannon, a 6-foot-9 sophomore forward, will transfer from Arizona because of apparent dissatisfaction over playing time last season. Tucson newspapers reported last week.

The *Arizona Daily Star* quoted Bohannon as saying he'd considered leaving several months ago and made a final decision after the basketball team's spring trip to Australia and New Zealand.

"I took care of the student part of student-athlete, but the athletics I'm not so happy about," he told the *Star*. "I understand who was in front of me last year (seniors Ed Stokes and Chris Mills), but as far as progress in practice, I should have played

more. It left a bitter taste in my mouth."

The *Tucson Citizen* quoted an unidentified source as saying Bohannon believed he should have been playing more by mid-season.

Bohannon, who is from San Bernardino, Calif., averaged eight minutes, 2.6 points and 2.2 rebounds per game last season. He was part of a freshman recruiting class last season that was considered one of the nation's best.

The *Citizen* said Bohannon expected to gain release from Arizona by this week.

Arizona coach Lute Olson was out of town on a recruiting trip and unavailable for comment.

The *Star* said Bohannon hadn't started any transfer paperwork and quoted an unidentified source close to the Arizona program as saying Bohannon has left the door open to return each time he's discussed transferring with teammates and coaches.

Both newspapers said Bohannon, who was expected to be in Arizona's front-line rotation next season with junior forward Ray Owes and sophomore center Joseph Blair, is considering Virginia, Oklahoma, UNLV or Tennessee.

The *Citizen* said Bohannon also was interested in Florida State; the *Star* said he also was looking at Long Beach State.

## Cougars extend coach's contract

PULLMAN, Wash. (AP) — Washington State has extended its contract with men's basketball coach Kelvin Sampson through the year 2000, the Pacific-10 Conference school says.

Athletic director Jim Livengood did not disclose terms last week.

Sampson, 37, has been the Cougars' head coach since 1988. His contract was first extended through 1998 after the team's 16-12 finish in 1991, Washington State's first winning season in eight years.

Livengood said the new contract extension was a reward for the team's 15-12 record last season, the school's third consecutive winning campaign. The team finished fifth in the Pac-10 for the third year in a row.

In 1992, the school won a bid to the National Invitational Tournament.

"Kelvin has continued to prove why he is one of

the best basketball minds in the country," Livengood said. "He has taken Cougar basketball to another level."

Sampson seemed happy with the new contract. "I think this (contract extension) is a reflection of all the people associated with the Cougar basketball family," Sampson said. "It gives the program stability and gives recruits a feeling that the university has faith in me."

Sampson joined Washington State in 1986 as an assistant to coach Len Stevens. Sampson was named coach when Stevens left after the 1987 season. Sampson's team finished 13-16 his first year, 10-19 in 1989 and 7-22 in 1990.

Sampson's career record at Washington State is 83-92.

Before he came to Washington State, Sampson was both head coach and an assistant at Montana Tech.

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