It's time to dispel the latest myth concerning the Colorado football program.

It is not imperative that CU hire a black coach.

In fact, CU shouldn't hire a black coach. Neither should CU hire a white coach, a green coach, a purple coach or a polka-dotted coach.

Colorado athletic director Mike Bohn should ... drum roll, please ... hire the best coach.

Daring thought, eh? Hiring a coach on the basis of color is insulting at best and morally repugnant at worst. Demanding that Colorado hire a black coach is suggesting that there is no other way an African American could get the job.

Bowl Odds

Dec. 20
New Orleans Bowl, 6 p.m., ESPN
Southern Miss 7 over Arkansas St. (63)

Dec. 21
GMAC Bowl, 6 p.m., ESPN
Tennessee 1 1/2 over Texas El Paso (61)

Dec. 22
Las Vegas Bowl, 6 p.m., ESPN
Cal 7 over Tulsa (62)

Poinsettia Bowl, 6:30 p.m., ESPN2
Navy 2 1/2 over Colorado State (69)

Dec. 23
Fort Worth Bowl, 6 p.m., ESPN
Kansas State 3 over Houston (49)

Dec. 24
Hawaii Bowl, 6:30 p.m., ESPN
Nevada 2 over Central Florida (63)

Dec. 26
Motor City Bowl, 2 p.m., ESPN
Memphis 7/4 over Akron (48)

Dec. 27
Champs Sports Bowl, 3 p.m., ESPN
Clemson 4 1/2 over Colorado (63)

Dec. 28
Insight Bowl, 6:30 p.m., ESPN
Arizona State 11 over Rutgers (62)

Dec. 30
Music City Bowl, 10 a.m., ESPN
Mississippi 3 over Virginia (66)

Sun Bowl, noon, KONG (4)
UCLA 3 1/2 over Northwestern (74)

Independence Bowl, 1 p.m., ESPN
South Carolina 4 over Missouri (61)

Peach Bowl, 5:30 p.m., ESPN
Miami-Florida 3/2 over LSU (61)

Nevada 4 over Utah State (63)

Jan 2
Cotton Bowl, 9 a.m., KIVR (Fox)
Texas Tech 1 1/2 over Alabama (47)

Outback Bowl, 9 a.m., ESPN
Florida 3 over Iowa (47)

Gator Bowl, 10:30 a.m., KUSA (9)
Virginia Tech 7 1/2 over Louisville (55)

Capital One Bowl, 11 a.m., KMGM (7)
Auburn 10 1/4 over Wisconsin (63)

Fiesta Bowl, 3 p.m., KMGM (7)
Ohio State 4 over Notre Dame (55)

Sugar Bowl, 6:30 p.m., KMGM (7)
Georgia 6 over West Virginia (45)

Jan 4
Orange Bowl, 6 p.m., KMGM (7)
Penn State 8 over Florida State (48)

Rose Bowl, 6 p.m., KMGM (7)
Southern Cal 7 over Texas (71)

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cluded the two players generally regarded as the best players in the state, Maurice Greer and Maurice Lucas. Both are black.

Greer did not come to CU because of academic issues, but Lucas on Sunday won the Lee Willard award as the team's outstanding freshman.

That's not to say that Colorado hasn't had problems attracting top-tier talent — of all colors, from all states — on a consistent basis for the last several years. That has indeed been the case.

But the fact that the top players in the state this year have been hesitant to commit to CU has nothing to do with race.

Rather, the reasons are much more simple. I can come up with 70 off the top of my head. If you need more, I can think of another 30 very quickly.

There's also this to remember: the man more responsible than any other single person — ever — for advancement of black coaches in Division I football is a former CU head coach.

To this day, the number of black head coaches in the history of Division I ball numbers less than 20.

Four of those coaches were assistants under Bill McCartney: Karl Dorrell, Jim Caldwell, Ron Dickerson and Bob Simmons. Simply, Colorado has a pretty good history in that department.

So, what should Mike Bohn be doing?

The Buff A.D. should be interviewing the best candidates for the position he can find. He must interview the coaches he believes are the best fit for all the particular quirks that are associated with coaching at the University of Colorado.

Not coincidentally, one of the most qualified people for the position is a former Buff who played and worked for McCartney, and who also worked for Rick Neuheisel and Gary Barnett as an assistant.

Without question, Jon Embree is among the top candidates for the position.

But should Bohn have interviewed Embree because he is black?

Of course not. That would be an insult to Embree, an insult to the program and an insult to everyone who has an interest in the program.

Bohn interviewed Embree because he is one of the most highly qualified candidates available.

Embree knows the program perhaps better than anyone.

He grew up in Colorado. He played when McCartney turned CU from a national laughingstock into a national power, and he coached at CU when it was one of the elite programs in the nation.

If anyone has an idea of what it takes to win at Colorado, it is Embree.

Does that mean he's the best man for the job?

Not my decision. Not your decision.

Rather, it will be the decision of the man whose career — and the future of the department he's been hired to guide — will be tied directly to his choice.

Bet on this: if Mike Bohn hires Embree, it won't be because Embree is black. If Bohn hires another coach — be it Dan Hawkins, Randy Shannon, Butch Davis or the man on the moon — the deciding factor won't be skin color.

The deciding factor will be which coach — according to Bohn's judgment — has the best chance to lead Colorado to success.

And that's the way it should be.