

Hilltoppers Headed To C-USA

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ESPN is reporting that Conference USA will add Western Kentucky and its new coach Bobby Petrino. The Hilltoppers are also the fifth Sun Belt Conference team to join C-USA. Western Kentucky will replace Tulsa,

which won the C-USA championship last fall.

Commissioner Britton Banowsky said on Monday that Western Kentucky will officially join C-USA on July 1, 2014. Tulsa is expected to announce Tuesday that it will join the Big East football schools in their soon-to-be renamed league in 2014, sources told ESPN's Brett McMurphy. The renamed Big East will have 12 members in 2015 when Navy joins for football only. Among that group will be seven ex-Conference USA teams: Tulsa, Tulane, East Carolina, Central Florida, SMU, Houston and basketball power Memphis.

Appalachian State University announced last Wednesday that it was moving up to the Football Bowl Subdivision and accepted an invitation to the Sun Belt Conference. The school released a statement on Monday night concerning Western Kentucky's possible move to C-USA.

"We were aware of the possibility of Western Kentucky's departure from the Sun Belt Conference when we accepted the Sun Belt's invitation for membership last week," Athletic Director Charlie Cobb said. "We are fully confident that Commissioner Karl Benson and the conference's chancellors and presidents will identify a valued replacement as quickly as possible and that the Sun Belt will continue to meet Appalachian State's stated goals as a Division I FBS conference that cultivates geographic rivalries and makes financial sense for our University."

The Mountaineers will officially join the SBC on July 1, 2014. James Madison and Liberty have been named as possible schools to replace WKU.