



UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BUFFALOES SPORTS INFORMATION SERVICE

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For Immediate Release February 5, 2014 (*Contact David Plati*)

CU HEAD COACH MIKE MACINTYRE / LETTER OF INTENT DAY PRESS CONFERENCE

General

"Today is a fun day, it's always like Christmas to me and I'm excited about today and what our staff has done. First of all, I would like to thank [chancellor] Phil Distefano and [athletic director] Rick George – first time ever that I have been at a place (where) every single recruiting weekend the Chancellor and the A.D. showed up to the main meal, and spent the entire time there, and it was really, really awesome. Rick did a great job of presenting our new facilities, and Phil echoing how the University is behind what we are doing here, and I think that made a big, big difference because that doesn't happen at every school you go to and I am very appreciative of them.

"Our staff did a phenomenal job of getting out there and recruiting the area, and I'm really pleased with their hard work and their effort. I feel excited about these young men; I feel like we are getting the athlete and the quality of character that we want. When you do that, you build a team and you build staying power within your program and that builds on top of itself and that's how you become successful.

"We were looking – of course on offense with Paul Richardson leaving – we were trying to find a guy or two that could run like Paul and we definitely feel like we found one in [WR] Shay Fields, and he came off a great program, they won the state of California's highest classification and were ranked No. 2 in the nation and he was the go-to receiver. I feel like he can really run, I'm really excited about Shay. We also felt like we needed to get more speed and athleticism on defense, so we felt like we signed from defensive ends that can do that, we felt like we signed from defensive lineman that can run. And then we signed some big corners that we think can help us – receivers are getting bigger and bigger, and they're faster, so you have to get bigger and faster – so we felt good about that area.

"And then we felt like we needed some athletes on offense, not really caring about size in those areas all the time, but could make people miss in the open field and catch balls in the open space, get the ball out of the backfield and do different things like that and we definitely feel like we did that. We feel like we have a tight end that can stretch the field, and we really are excited about Dylan Keeney and his ability to do that. Cade Aspay, the quarterback we signed, his accuracy, and accuracy are extremely important to us at the quarterback position, extremely important. [Offensive coordinator Brian] Lindgren went around and watched a lot of guys last May and this fall and felt like he (Aspay) was the most accurate guy on the board of anybody we were looking at. We're excited about the class, and excited about what's going on with the program."

On Having A Full Year To Recruit

"I feel like we were really able to dive into the young men more. You got to know a lot of character traits of them, which is extremely important to me. I've always said, 'get the right guys' and I feel like we did. Of course they have to be good athletes, we know that, but the right type of people and I feel like we are really working towards that. You want your class to really be that type of young man, and that gives you staying power and less attrition. You build a program over time, and that's how we're going to win here. We're going to build good players, number one, and then good character, number two, and then you keep them, and you build them, and you grow them, and you start winning football games. And that's what I felt like we did in this class, and we need to do in every class."

On How He Felt He Was Received By The Recruits

"In recruiting, you're going to get some 'No's' but you let the 'No's' effect you, you have to keep working, you have to have a good enough pool. Our staff, [director of recruiting] Adam Toyama and our recruiting staff, Patrick Williams and all those guys do a good job to get guys to see, and then our coaches do a really great job. I think we do a really good job of evaluating, and then we watch tons and tons of video on these players and then do a lot of research. We don't just call the head coach, we call the principle, we call the counselor, and our coaches actually talk to janitors in the school. You want to find out what the kid is about, and if there are any red flags I tell them (assistant coaches) walk away."

On Having Other Schools Trying To Recruit CU Verbal Commits

"That's always going to happen, and you have to understand that. That's why you keep recruiting guys, and you keep recruiting, and they go, 'Why are you still recruiting those guys, you have these guys committed' – you never know what is going to happen. That's why we keep doing that, and keep working on it. A lot of the kids that people came in on us and we held onto some of them, and we lost some of them, nobody else had evaluated them like we had, and then they go, 'whoa', I mean nobody else was on them, and then they come in and they grab them. I think that shows you how our guys are evaluating, and what we're doing, and as we keep progressing our program we'll stop having that happen less and less. But, at the same time, I always felt like you get the guys that want to be here, and the guys that are committed, if you are recruiting the right pool of guys then you'll be alright."

On Whether They Filled All Positions Of Need

"Yeah, we did. We had a few more guys on scholarship on offense than we did on defense, we needed to get some kids that could run more on defense and the defensive line, get more of those defensive ends. Looking at our league (Pac-12 Conference) after going through it one year, really there is only one team that tries to pound you much, and that's Stanford and they've done a good job of it, but everybody else is pretty much a wide-open type thing. So, if you go and get 280-pound defensive ends, they're never going to get to the quarterback and he's going to throw all day. You need 230-pound linebacker/athletes 6-foot-3 type guys; we got three of those type guys, and then I think we got two d-linemen that I think can really rush the passer, and can run, and have some size, so I was excited about that. Then, we sign two linebackers, those two linebackers are mainly inside linebackers, but then we signed some more safeties, and some bigger corners, and some more athlete type guys that you would play when you play half the teams we play that play with four wide outs half the time, so I feel good about that."

On Signing Players From Winning High School Programs

"A lot of our coaches, I'll use [offensive line coach] Gary Bernardi and [defensive coordinator] Kent Baer for example, some of the schools that we got those guys out of, they've recruited those schools for 25 years. They've had a lot of the same head coaches like Mission Viejo with Bob Johnson, great name in the state. St. John Bosco is kind of a new and up and coming program that is doing very well, and we had our San Jose St. camp there when we were at San Jose St. so we knew all of those guys. So, all of those interactions helped us with that. You do try to go to programs that are successful, and you find kids from programs that aren't, but usually the programs that are successful have a great weight program, and a great work ethic, you know the kids are going to be eligible, you know they are going to be disciplined, so that's important to know. You don't just go do that, but sometimes you do gravitate towards there because those kids are all eligible, they're good kids, they're well prepared and they come from programs that are used to playing a lot of football games, and they understand how to prepare."

On Who He Sees Making Impacts This Year

"I hope all of them, but what we do is really throw them out there in two-a-days, the way we practice ya'll have seen it before, and they are all getting reps it's not like they're standing. You can throw them in there in the scrimmages and stuff. But of course, we would hope that [WR] Shay Fields will be ready, [DB] Evan White, I'm hoping that [OL] Sully Wiefels and some of those guys can help us. And I think we are going to need a couple of our d-linemen to help us on the front. So, those are some areas that I think those guys would have a chance. But there is always a guy that pops up and surprises you and is ready to go and does great."

On His Initial Impressions of Addison Gillam, The Gem Of Last Year's Class

"I thought Addison was ready to go. Now, did I think he was a first-team All-American? No, but I did think he would start for us and be a good player for us. A few of these pass rushers are going to need to help us. So, we'll see how they do early in the season when they're going up against (Stephane) Nembot and those bigger guys and see how they handle it. So, I'm excited about that."

On How He Feels They Recruited The State Of Colorado

"We signed four in state and we're still hoping another one might come. But, there are a couple of guys we lost. But, we're already ahead on this next year. I think we've made more inroads. What we keep hearing every time we go out there is 'Wow, you're here all the time. We're glad you're here. You're working it. You're doing it. We hear that all the time. We're going to every school and we're working on his 15 year old kids and some 16 year old kids already that we've evaluated to see what they do. We've researched them. I feel that we're ahead of that. Of course I would like to get a couple more in-state but, I do feel like we're making inroads. I really do. We're making a footprint and we have to keep doing that."

On Recruiting His Son Jay

"We're excited about Jay, that was a hard decision for Jay, but when it came down to it he loves Colorado, he wants to be a part of what we're doing, and he's excited about doing that. He's a young man that can really run fast, he's really quick, and he can play multiple positions – not quarterback – but he can play multiple spots. He's athletic, he can be a returner, he can be a corner, a safety, a nickel back, he can be a slot receiver, so we'll just figure out where he fits in, but he brings speed and quickness to us that I'm excited about a lot like the Donovan Lee kid we signed, he can play all those spots and bring speed and quickness and athletic ability which if ya'll keep watching our league (Pac-12 Conference) like I have, you better have quite a few of those guys and I feel like we were able to get quite a few of those guys in this class."

On How The Staff Evaluated Jay MacIntyre

"I knew he was a good enough player, so I had the staff watch him four separate times without me in the room, and had them debate and talk about it. And every man, they all came and said he can play for us, he can play slot receiver, he can return punts, so they did it all. I said, ya'll got to tell me, because I'm not going to bring my son in here to a situation where he can't help us. I said, 'he's got other offers, he can go play other places,' so then we started recruiting him. I let [special teams coach] Toby Neinas do most all the recruiting with him and he did a really good job. It came down to us and Wyoming, Wyoming was an hour and 40 minutes away, and he had some other offers and he really thought hard about that. But, when it really came down to it he said, 'Dad, I really love Colorado, I really love what's going on, I like the kids on your team,' because he got to know a lot of them, and he said, 'I'd like to be here to help you do it, and I'll do whatever we need to do,' and I said, 'alright.' But he did struggle with it for a little bit, it's hard having to play for your dad, but he's mature enough to handle all that. If he has to hold the dummy, and do whatever he has to do, he'll do anything he has to do to help us win. He's a good athlete like his mom, so that's a good thing."

On The Scholarship The MacIntyre Family Has Endowed To The University

"I sat down with [Director of Development] Kurt [Gulbrand] in December and we were talking about it. I'm infatuated with lacrosse. I was at Duke and they have a great lacrosse program. I've met with the lacrosse coach here a couple times and our family wanted to leave a legacy here. So, we endowed a scholarship that will always be under the MacIntyre family name. So, when I'm dead and gone, after a while, it'll still be there. I think lacrosse is a great sport and an up and coming sport in America. So, my wife and I were excited about being able to do that and I'm very proud of that. So, that's very important. People have asked me 'Why did you give Jay a scholarship?' He's earned it. He's earned it. He could have gone to other places and if I wouldn't have given him a scholarship he probably would have gone somewhere else. Seriously, because he wouldn't have been able to do signing day. He wouldn't have been able to be on ESPN. He wouldn't have been able to be Rivals. So, all the things he worked for he wouldn't have been able to do. I think he's earned the right to be able to do that. I've moved all over the country and he's always been one of the best players at every school he was at. He's a really good student like his mom and I think he has deserved and earned the right to do that."

On Whether He Had Any Reservations In Recruiting His Son To Play For Him

"No, because he's not a quarterback. I called three coaches that their sons played for them that are very successful coaches. All three of them were in BCS bowls. And they told me that if your son doesn't play quarterback for you, it works out fine. Now, your son also has to realize that you're going to be a lot harder on him then you are everybody else. And he can't screw up and he can't mess up. So, your kid has to understand that. If he doesn't want to handle that then he can go somewhere else. So, I think all of those guys gave me very good and they lived it and have done it and they're very successful."

On Whether Former CU Coach Dan Hawkins Was One Of The Three Coaches He Contacted

"No, I don't know Dan."

On His Experiences In Playing For His Dad During His Own College Football Career

"He said to shut up, work hard and make good grades. That's it. And be your own man."

On How Prospects Are Rated And The Importance Of It

"Yes, because I'll just put it this way, Addison Gillam was a two-star. Michael Adkins was a two-star. Chidobe (Awuize) was a two-star. They can start on any team in this league. And we've got other guys here that we redshirted that we'll be playing next year and you'll say 'Whoa.' I think that is important to understand. The stars are important. I understand that but, I can't worry about that. I've got to evaluate our guys and get the right guys and work at that."

On What It Will Take To Get Highly-Rated Recruits To Come To Colorado In The Future

"Win more football games. I was kind of dying laughing today. Minnesota won a bunch of games this year and they were doing really well. They still had the 12th ranked class but they're still beating everybody else that's ranked above them. But, if Minnesota wins again, they'll sign a few more kids and their rankings will go up. That just happens. I think we've just got to win football games and as we win more football games and we consistently show that, then we'll consistently have more of that. If Colorado offers a kid and Texas takes him in the last week, then they're good enough to go to Texas. We evaluated him when he didn't even have a star I don't think. All of that type of thing really goes into winning football games. I really believe that. So, as we do that we'll have better classes and we'll keep getting better classes. Then, we'll win more games and we'll attract more kids and we'll have better crowds, we'll have new facilities. So, all of that goes hand in hand with getting a better class. But, I definitely think this is a class that we can win with. And we'll know more in about three years with them after a couple of them redshirt and we work with them. But, I definitely believe we can. There's no doubt in my mind."

On Connor Wood's Late Decision To Leave The Program And Its Effects On His Recruiting Efforts

"We had a staff meeting right after that happened. I was pretty shocked. I really didn't want him to do it but, he felt like it was time to move on and I understand. The other side of me said 'No, I wish he would stay and compete for it because we need him. But, it's so late in the process that if you go out at that time and just try to scramble and find a guy, you might have a miss. With a quarterback, you better really research it well. We knew we had a good one in Cade Apsay. We feel like we have a good one in Jordan Gehrke. So, we feel like we have three good guys."

"We're already on some really good and talented 2015 guys. Some of them are really, really good. So, if you go do that and you have two freshmen in this class, then that puts you right out of the path for the 2015 guys. They're gone. They're not even looking at you. We're on some really, really good ones. I've never had my first-stringer be hurt. I've had to play up to a third-team guy in a game but, I've never had to consistently do that. So, we're looking for a really good walk-on guy that can come in. He'll have all the reps and he'll be able to travel and that type of thing. So, that was what we decided because it was so late in the process that it's hard to go get And we already had a good one. So, a lot of the kids go 'You've already got one, I'm not coming there.' Then we would have felt like we would have had to reach too far and we felt like we could get a better quarterback in the 2015 class."

On if Wood gave him a reason why he waited so late into the recruiting process to make his decision

"No, he didn't. He just went home over Christmas and he talked to his family about it. It was really late. I mean I didn't know until January. So, we really had no chance. I mean there wasn't anybody that we felt like we could get our hands on because everybody else that was still working had a quarterback committed."

On Walk-On quarterback Trent Sessions

"Well the way we practice, we needed another guy that can help us in practice. And he can really throw it. I was teasing him and I said 'Are the girls chasing you around campus now that you're on the football team?' And he just smiled. But, Trent can really throw it well and he does a really good job. He understands our call system; he understands our signals and all that. So, he'll be able to help us get through practices and do some things and help us practice the way we need to practice this spring. I don't want to wear out the other two guys arms. I told coach (Brian) Lindgren when it happened that he better start warming his arm up because he's going to be throwing more. But, Trent is going to be able to do a good job at it. It's exciting because it rejuvenates some of the other guys and some of the walk-ons and some different things. So, that's the exciting part of it and it's always fun to see that with the kids."

On Whether he is Inviting Any Other Prospects to Spring Camp

"We've already had our tryouts on that so we have enough kids for spring practice. But, we are actively trying to look for more walk-ons especially in our state that have good arms that might want to walk on the football team in the fall."

On the Importance of Having Both the Chancellor and the Athletic Director at Various Recruiting Functions

"I know they're committed to us. I think it's more important for the recruits. I mean, they go other places and I had a couple of them say 'We never met the Chancellor at the school.' The AD (Athletic Director) just barely popped in and ate dinner with them. He stayed and communicated and showed them our power point slide show and our facilities. The Chancellor spoke. His wife came every time. So, I think that was very, very good. I think it's also good for our Chancellor and AD to meet our kids and see their families and understand the kids that we are recruiting. We also have our host players there to interact with our players more. I think that makes our players that we are committed because I know they definitely are. You have to keep reinforcing kids all the time."

On Recruit Sam Bennion And The Mormon Mission That Will Keep Him Out Of The Program Until 2016

"He's 6-4½, 260 pounds and he can run. And when he comes back he'll be 21 years old. He'll be 6-4½ and about 275 and he'll have all the spring and the summer and he'll be ready to play. That'll be a great person to fit in in that 2017 season. And we'll have four years with him. We had a lot of success with some of those guys at San Jose State that went on missions and they were really mature and they were sharp. After I got beat by BYU one time I said 'Hey, we need to do this more often if we can.' So, I think that's important to us and he's the type of quality person we're looking for too."

On Whether Bennion Will Be Able to Study The Playbook During His Mission

"He won't have time on the Mormon mission. They're so busy. But he will have time to work out. He already has it set up. So, he'll do that but he won't He'll have plenty of time. He'll get here in January of 2017 then go through winter, spring and all of summer and be ready to go in the fall. I think we'll have a guy able to play four straight years for us."

On His Selling Point To Potential Recruits

"Well our theme and approach was that, number one, Boulder is a destination spot. It's one of the top 100 academic schools in the world. It was voted the number one college campus in the country this year. There are a lot of special things about it. Then, our program is the 23rd winningest program in college football history. When you tell kids that they go 'Wow, I didn't know all that.' And when they come and see it and feel it and we give them the opportunity to play and play early and help build something. So, that was our theme. Then our theme of also 'We're building the new facilities. Here it comes and you'll be a part of that' was a big part of it. But, I think it's interesting that the more we got around the kids and the more we got around their parents, like when I went and had dinner at their houses and that of thing, the thing they kept saying was when they came on their official visit that they loved the atmosphere and how our coaches interacted with each other. I don't know if you've ever been around us but, we tease each other a lot. We're pretty close. We're all bound together. We've had no attrition on our staff which is awesome. I feel like they believe what we're doing here and they like the area. That's a big deal in college football: To keep your staff together and keep it moving in the right direction. So, I think they really saw that. I had quite a few parents say that to me which was to me a little bit unusual. They kept talking about how there was truly a family atmosphere and there was truly a caring about their kids. We do a panel where I stick five of our players up there and I just walk out of the room. I don't tell the players one thing. They can ask them anything they want to ask them. They were really impressed with how our kids talked about us and talked about the program. They were very real with them on what we do and I think that showed what we are trying to instill in our young men."

On Whether It Was Easier To Sell Both Boulder And CU Now That He Has A Full Year Under His Belt

"Yes, it was. It was easier for me to sell it and it was easier for me to get down to restaurants downtown. I knew where I was going. So, all of that was good. Our kids all stayed downtown at the St. Julian. They could walk downtown. The parents all know that Boulder is an unbelievable town and our kids have done a great job with that. Our hosts did a great job of showing them the campus. So, it was good."

On How Last Year's Record Factored Into His Recruiting Pitch

"It was brought up more as a positive. I was like 'Ok, we won four.' But, they saw the improvement from the year before. They realize that we're going in the right direction in what we're doing. They saw us in more games. A lot of the kids watched a lot of the games. When you're recruiting them, they start watching your games. I think they watched a lot of the games more. Some of them I wish they wouldn't have watched. But, some of them they watched and they thought they we were competing a lot better and they saw a lot more excitement in the football team. I think that's good."

On Coach Troy Walters' And His Recruiting Talents

"Well, Troy has a phenomenal personality and he's a former player. He does a great job. But, I think all of our coaches did a heck of a job. I mean each one of them was out there signing guys. Each one of them has great personalities. I think some of you are getting to know them. They're very personable people and I think the people saw that. They're very hard workers. The other thing is, when you go in a home, and you can think about this with anything you sell or do, If you don't believe in your place then they can see right through you in a minute. Our guys truly believe in the University of Colorado and they truly believe in what we're doing. That exudes through you. If any of the salesmen walk in your house and they really don't believe in what they're selling, you'll never buy it. But, they passionately believe it and they understand that that carries over. I really believe that our staff feels that and believes that. That's passed down from our administration on down to us. There's a lot of support and they understand where we're going and we'll get there."

On The Qualities of Shay Fields As A Receiver

"Speed kind of like Paul (Richardson) ... He has very good hands. He's very elusive. He's a really good route runner for his age. He had a really good high school receiver coach, Brian Treggs, who played at Cal. He really has taught him a lot of good receiving skills and he understands that. They had a good passing game for high school, a really good passing game for high school. And their quarterback is a really good passer so, he was able to run a lot of the routes and be able to ... A lot of the time in high school your quarterback is not as good so you can't run as many routes. So, he was able to do that. So, that was good for him."

On Whether He Has Coached His Son Before

"I coached him when he was seven years old in little league basketball. That's all I've coached him. There are times when I would take him and Johnston, our other son, and to the basketball court and shoot. We would go out and throw and do some running stuff and that kind of thing. All of the fundamental parts that he needed to know as far as how to catch a football, and type of thing. But, I've never coached him on a team or anything like that. But, he'll definitely be his own man and definitely compete. I'm just excited about his speed and athleticism. He brings a lot to the table for us."

On Terran Hasselbach

"Terran Hasselbach is the young man that we signed from Regis. He is a young man that came to our camp but couldn't really do anything at our camp because he was still getting over the injury. He was in a terrible car accident going into his sophomore year when he was going to be a starter at Regis. He couldn't play his sophomore year. He was going to play his junior year then he realized that he had something wrong with his back and he had to get another surgery. Then, he was well to go right in August. He played and he played phenomenally. I think he had 15 sacks, 35 hurries. You watch the film and he's all over the place. So, I started watching him and looking at him.

"We kept watching him and kept watching him and I went and visited with him and the family. We hadn't offered him yet at that time then went over Christmas and all that. Then, over the bowl holidays I was watching and there was a guy from Missouri that is like 6'1". He was SEC player of the year I think. The guy at Colorado State, he's like 6' tall. I kept seeing all these ... [Dwight] Freeney and all these guys and I just kept thinking 'Terran, Terran, Terran.' So, I went back on New Year's Day during the bowl games and pulled out my laptop and watched every single one of his games. I said 'I'm an idiot if we don't offer him.' So, we came back as a staff and watched him again and we said it was a no-brainer. He's a 3.6 student. He wants to be at Colorado. His Family is from the area. Regis high school is in our area. So, we brought him in and offered him and he wanted to come to CU and we're really excited about it. But, it is an amazing story. They both basically almost died, literally. What they're overcome ... He's completely healthy and strong. He's an ox. So, we're really excited about Terran."

On Whether The Fact That Terran's Father Played In The NFL Has Helped Him Develop As A Player

"Yes, I think it did because his dad coached the defensive line at Regis. So, you can see his ability to rush the passer. He's way ahead of his time in the way he uses his hands and the way he dips his shoulders, and the way he sets up the tackle. Good coaching got him there. So, I was very impressed with that. He has the first step and the explosion and he's extremely powerful. So, he's one of the guys I hope can rush the passer for us next year."

On The Importance of Finding Hidden Gems Like Linebacker Addison Gillam During the Recruiting Process

"It's really important. You just have to keep working and keep hunting, keep looking. So, we watch a lot of film and evaluate and compare guys all the time. It was kind of funny ... I'll give an example of (recruit) Dylan Keeney, who is a really good tight end. Well he only started at tight end last year consistently. His team went to the state championship. But, he also played outside linebacker. He was 6' 5" and he was a junior. I'm like 'Wow, that guy can move.' He's 205 pounds and he played tight end sparingly. Then this year they moved him to tight end. Well, we had him come to our camp. We put him at tight end. He can run and he can catch. We go 'Oh, my gosh. This is Ryan Otten all over again.' Ryan was an All-WAC player who broke every record at San Jose State and he's playing for the Chargers now. I said 'This is him all over again.' Then, he has no offers. So, we keep recruiting him. He goes to another camp and our coaches keep recruiting him in the Seattle area or something. So, there's another tight end there that is a four-star and he was offered by everybody. They go through all the drills and everybody goes 'Who in the world is Dylan Keeney?' They completely forgot about the other kid. They all starting going after him but we held onto him. He's 6-6, 225 pounds and he can run. So, I'm excited. It was a great job by Klayton Adams and our staff in evaluating and looking at him and working. That's why those camps are so big for us. We found Jase Franke. We found him at a camp in Redlands. He had no offers. He got seven offers after us and five of them in the Pac-12. Our guys are working in June. They're not vacationing. They're out everywhere. So, that's important for us to do that and we're able to find ... Those camps are important to us. They really are."

On Signing Day Feeling Like Christmas

"Christmas was good. Christmas was really good. The great thing about all these kids is they're really good students and we feel good about everything and everybody showing up like they should. I just hope nothing goes wrong with any of them but, everything looks great on that front. So, with Christmas, the packages are open. That's the exciting part too."

