



COLORADO FOOTBALL/JON EMBREE QUOTES

Press Conference, Boulder, Colo. (September 13, 2011)

On what he sees in Colorado State – “I see a lot of things. On the offensive side I see a kid that has grown up – the quarterback – when you look at our game last year, obviously his first game ever and then I have really been watching him a lot against San Diego State and BYU last year and just seeing the progress he has made and then to this year. That really jumps out to me from an offensive standpoint. Then defensively, I worked with [Colorado State defensive coordinator] Larry [Kerr] for three years. A Larry Kerr coached defense that is very fundamentally sound, they do a good job of tackling. They know where their help is, they do a good job in trying to take out an offense in what they do well and force you to do things that you don't do well. They are a very well coached team, they are 2-0, we are 0-2 and we have to have our A game.”

On how much it hurt CSU losing Mychal Sisson to injury – “You can definitely tell that he is the ring leader. He brings the energy on that side of the ball. He makes a lot of plays. Great player. How it affects them, we won't know until Saturday. Obviously he is a special player.”

On recruiting Colorado kids – “We want to recruit Colorado kids. Right now I think we have two committed and I think we will get another before it is all said and done. It is important, it is the University of Colorado, but at the same time it has to be the right kid. It has to be a kid that can come in here and help us and wants to be a Buffalo. We are a transient state. Sometimes it is an instate kid, but he really is not from here. If you look at the guys that we have, from [Anthony] Perkins to Jon Major and Ryan Miller, those are guys that grew up Buff fans and grew up on Colorado football. I was talking to the team and about some different things and the Big 12 Championship and some of the players. I asked them how many of them recognized player X or whatever and the only guys that raised their hands were instate kids. You could tell that they were guys, and Ryan was one of them, growing up and coming up watching us play. We have to get back to that where we are getting the top kids from this state staying and being a part of this program.”

On what he has seen in WR Paul Richardson since the first time he saw him on film – “He is a better route runner. I think he has improved his body control and using his speed and knowing when to burst and when to play at a different speed. He has always been a good hands catcher, not a body catcher, so he's always been good with that. And really understanding what defenses are trying to do and kind of understand where he fits in the scheme of what we are trying to do from a passing standpoint.”

On the uncertainty of the offensive tackle position affecting preparation – “It doesn't really affect me or our team because my mind sight it is kind of like the NFL, sometimes you don't know about guys until later in the week. The reason it has to be later is because we have to see who can practice and then how they feel the next day after practice. So whoever practices Wednesday, how many reps or snaps and then how comfortable we feel about them knowing the game plan, and then how do they feel on Thursday morning. To me that is the big key. Maybe some other coaches and I'm sure [offensive line] coach [Steve] Marshall would like to know sooner rather than later, but I'm ok having them make that decision later in the week if necessary.”

On what he thought of Colorado State growing up – “The thing I remember about CSU is the brawl that they had with Wyoming – when they walked through the stands, when they were at Wyoming and brawl broke out as they were in the stands. I remember that and thought that was kind of funny, but growing up, Colorado and Colorado State didn't play each other and I always thought that was kind of odd because my family, originally being from Los Angeles, UCLA-USC football game was always a big day in our household, you sat down and watched it. I always thought that it was kind of odd that Colorado didn't have that. I think it is special that we play each other every year.”

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On the CU-CSU split when he was on the UCLA staff – “There was a lot of stuff going on because they had Larry and then they had Ron Schneider and then obviously myself and [offensive coordinator] Eric [Bieniemy]. It wasn’t just a CU-CSU football game, it came down to pick-up hoops, we had a battle, I don’t think Larry appreciated Ron Schneider writing a lot of checks that they couldn’t cash so to speak. So it was all a lot of fun. Larry is a great guy, a very good coach, and he has a great passion for Colorado State. You can tell it is a special place for him. I think his daughter is working back up there and I think both of his daughters actually went to school there. When we were at UCLA, we were definitely watching this game and seeing who would have bragging rights for the year.”

On TB Rodney Stewart’s improvement – “I think Rodney has become a better runner from a patience standpoint and letting things develop. He has really improved in the pass protection game. He has really improved on that. I’ve always thought that he was a good receiver and that he was under-utilized and we are obviously doing that and trying to utilize him in the passing game that way too. The thing about Rodney is that he is really tough. He is a physical guy and some scouts were asking me about that the other day about him and I was just explaining about how he is a truly physical guy and likes getting after people.”

On Stewart breaking Bieniemy’s rushing record – “I think if he can stay healthy, I think it is very realistic for him to knock Eric down to number two.”

On the defense after two games – “Our defense I believe is a reflection of our team. We are just inconsistent. In the first half, we really should have had Cal held to nine points, but we let them get a big play right before the half which set up a touchdown. We go that stretch, they go three-and-out, we rough the punter, they go back out there and go three-and-out. We hit the quarterback a lot. But then we go on stretches where you are just saying, ‘What are we doing?’ But that is our team, either if it is special teams, offensively – we play well in spurts and from the Hawaii game to the Cal game, it was longer spurts but we haven’t played a game yet. That is what we have to do, get to a point where we can play a complete game.”

On how to make his team play a complete game – “If I knew that I would be a rich man, I would be selling that pill to everyone in the league. Every game is going to have its ebb-and-flow and really it is how you react when adversity hurts you. How you react when the other team makes a little run or a little push or you have some things that go against you – either it is a turnover, or a bad penalty, or whatever – how you can react and respond to that. During training camp, we tried to put them through as many adverse situations as we could. Winners and losers and losers running or doing up-downs and just try and keep them to realize how important it is to focus every play. Like I said, we are doing it in longer spurts, but with the level of competition that we are playing, you can’t win if you don’t have the ability to do it for an entire game.”

On how the young cornerbacks have done in the first two games – “I feel like all of our young players have done well, I really do. All of our freshmen have done very well, they’ve done a good job of contributing, they have gone in there and not having a lot of mental busts – which is what you worry about with younger guys on Saturday with it being packed, the bands playing, and they get hit once and their ears are ringing a little, and you don’t know how they are going to react. All of those guys that we have played so far have done a very good job in being fundamentally sound, knowing what they are supposed to do, and competing, so I’m pleased with all of them.”

On if he is concerned about the running game – “I don’t know if concerned is the word because I see what some of the possible issues are and it is just a matter of us sustaining our blocks, hitting the hole, receivers blocking downfield. I guess I would be concerned if it was more scheme or just being overpowered. Then I would be concerned. Like I said in my press conference after the game, I believe in these players, I trust these players and I’m not overly concerned about this being fixed. I have the upmost confidence in our players and coaches that the situation will be resolved.”

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On OL Sione Tau – “I was proud of Sione because this March he mentioned to me that he had never played. He has come a long way. I think he has lost 60 something pounds, and he has done a great job in maintaining that weight and I know it is important to him. Just like some of our other players, he is going to get beat at times, and I understand that but I know he will give me great effort, I know he will know what to do and I know it is important to him. To me, a kid like him, a kid like Conrad Obi, some of those kids who are in their last year and are getting their opportunity, making the most of it, that means a lot to me as a coach because they won’t look back at their time at Colorado as a waste of time and that they didn’t achieve anything. I think it will help springboard them into the rest of their life knowing that they are going to have to fight and compete and have to keep working. Eventually good things are going to happen if you do things the right way.”

On if the CU-CSU game has more meaning to the Rams – “No, because it means a lot to me. I do not get that sense. It is important, it is important to this program, it is important to us. First off, it is the next game we play. Second off, we are 0-2, they are 2-0. We have to find a way to win. Two years ago they came in here and knocked the doors off of us. They came in here and took a picture on the logo and rightly so, they came in here and beat us. That game has always meant a lot to me, and I will make sure that not only the instate kids understand the importance. I feel that our players understand the importance of playing every game every week. I don’t think you will ever have an issue with our team ever not understanding how important it is to play that week.”

On Eric Bieniemy’s pregame argument with CSU coaches in 2001 – “How much tape do you have in the camera? That is a longer story and it is more of a misunderstanding. It was Eric’s first year and it was just a confusion over who was warming up on what side of the field. You will have to ask him the exact details. It has kind of become a little bit of an urban legend – it has grown since it happened.”

On playing the game at Sports Authority Field at Mile High instead of on campus – “I’m a campus guy but it doesn’t really matter to me. The good thing about it being down there is that it gives people who don’t want to make the drive up here to Boulder or Fort Collins an opportunity to come and see us play.”

On if he is concerned about the CSU defense – “Again, I don’t want to say concerned, but as you sit here and look at them – [Mike] Orakpo, I was with his brother [Brian] in Washington and I don’t know what kind of player his brother is but from just watching tape, same kind of motor, same kind of passion when he plays. Again I trust our guys. No matter who we put out there, I feel confident that they will be able to compete with them. Are they going to make plays? Yeah, they are going to make plays - that is part of the game - but I am not overly concerned because I trust the guys who we are going to put out there.”

On DE Chidera Uzo-Diribe – “Chidera to me a guy kind of like what Paul Richardson was last year. Chidera has to get more consistency and I think Chidera can be that kind of player on that side of the ball for us, as far as a guy that you have to account whether you slide protection for him, whether you put a tight end over there to help or a running back to chip. He flashes again in spurts and that is what I noticed with Paul last year when I came in and started evaluating guys. He was there in spurts but then he would disappear at periods of time. One thing about Chidera is that he is pretty good against the run. The key to him in being consistent is him just playing. Learning more about the game and understanding more about what offenses are trying to do. Understanding the game inside the game and part of that is knowing your assignment, which he does, now it is understanding backfield sets, understanding tackle – light or heavy – different things like that. Understanding from watching tape, ‘Hey this may be a situation where they may want to screen. When he gets to that point, he can be a very good player for us.’”

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On Colorado State head coach Steve Fairchild – “I was able to spend some time with Steve a couple times this offseason, so I’ve gotten the chance to know him that way. I know he has been in the Mike Martz system a little bit when he was doing his coordinating thing. I followed him a little from that point because in Kansas City we ran a similar system. You can see it when they run their passing concepts. You know, ‘Zero-78 pump,’ you know what it is, you know the protection. I know he is a stickler, he is demanding. You can see that the team is starting to take the shape of his personality, his attitude and what he wanted to do. I think as you look at last year’s tape and some of this year’s tape, obviously he took a lot of heat from what happened last year, but it took a lot of guts to say, ‘I’m going to play a true-freshman quarterback and I will live with the growing pains.’ A lot of coaches would have panicked and tried to put other people in or whatever, and he made the right decision because I think this guy, Pete [Thomas] is going to be a very good player. When you have a quarterback, especially a young kid who has never played, a lot of times he sees certain things or he is in those situations, you can’t replicate that in practice. The kid handled it a lot and has made tremendous improvement. That I think is a testament to Steve Fairchild and how he has handled the kid, kept his confidence, how he has helped coaching him and helping him through those growing pains to kind of accelerate the process.”

-COLORADO FOOTBALL-