



Police praise CU athletes for helping out

Bufs come to aid of seriously injured cyclist

By Kyle Ringo
Tuesday, August 18, 2009

BOULDER, Colo. — Five Colorado athletes are drawing praise from University Police Cmdr. Tim McGraw after coming to the aid of a seriously injured cyclist Aug. 9 just down the hill from the Dal Ward Center.

Becah Fogle, a sophomore from the volleyball team, along with Cody Hawkins, Scotty McKnight, Kyle Cefalo and Aric Goodman from the football team spotted the injured man shortly after 10 p.m. as they passed by in cars.

The football players were returning to the Dal Ward Center after a late-night walk-through on the practice fields when they saw a fellow CU student identified in police reports as Jacob Dana face down on the pavement motionless near the recycling center outside the northeast gates to Folsom Field.

"We got out and the guy was still clipped into his bike on the ground completely unconscious," Hawkins said. "He had blood coming out of his nose. His hair was scraped on the ground. His back tire was completely bent and his water bottle and sunglasses were on the ground probably about 20 feet apart."

Fogle called 911 on her cell phone and Cefalo ran up the hill to the Dal Ward Center to find head athletic trainer Miguel Rueda, who sprinted back down the hill to help Dana until paramedics arrived. Hawkins and McKnight said Dana was making snoring sounds with a lot of blood around him and blood coming from his nose.

McKnight said they were careful not to move him but tried to comfort him and talk to him while waiting for help to arrive. Police and paramedics arrived and transported Dana to a local hospital. He was not wearing a helmet, according to McGraw.

"The good news is this student who had the accident is going to be able to come back to school," McGraw said. "It may be a little bit of a recovery period, but in speaking with his father, it sounds like he is going to recover enough. It may not be this semester."

McGraw was not able to provide an update on Dana's condition Monday afternoon.

McGraw said he chose to send a letter to athletic director Mike Bohn and football coach Dan Hawkins this week, praising the student-athletes for their willingness to help.

McGraw said student-athletes are criticized for doing something wrong off-the-field but they don't always get the credit they deserve when they do some good outside of their sports.

"It's definitely safe to say that because of their actions, they minimized the injuries to this guy, in as far as doing the things they did in expediently getting care to him," McGraw said. "They stopped a bad situation from going into a horrific situation. ... They certainly at the very least, gave this guy the opportunity medically that he needed to be able to recover.

"Had he been there exposed for a period of time, the chances I think would be very good that he would have sustained permanent and potentially devastating injuries. That didn't happen because of their actions."

Goodman said he, his teammates and Fogle were only doing what anyone would have done in the same situation.

"We didn't do anything extraordinary," Goodman said. "We were just driving up there and happened to come across him. You know, you're not just going to let somebody lie there."

McKnight was initially the only person to see Dana because he was positioned out of the way and first appeared to be just a backpack and bike in the street, what players described as "a shadow on the side of the road."

"I don't think it was anything anybody else wouldn't have done," McKnight said. "We were trying to wake him up, but we didn't want to move him either because we didn't know what injuries he might have sustained. He was still completely hooked into his bike pedals and his face, I mean, he had just face planted."



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cu briefs

Clemons glad to catch on with Buffaloes

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BOULDER — With each day and every practice, Colorado wide receiver Toney Clemons becomes more convinced he made a wise decision in choosing the Buffaloes.

A former four-star prospect from New Kensington, Pa., Clemons (6-feet-3 and 205 pounds) transferred during the spring from Michigan, where he caught 12 passes for 106 yards in two seasons. He also considered Cincinnati after leaving Michigan.

"The difference was just everything," Clemons said Monday about picking CU over the Bearcats. "Academically, the coaching staff, how they care about you as a person first, then as a player. It's all of that.

"They run a great system here. It's a sleeping giant. It's starting to wake up. The alarm clock is going off. It's just a great time to be on board and be a part of this."

Smooth and confident, Clemons may be Colorado's most gifted receiver. Under NCAA rules, however, he must sit out this season as a transfer. He will have two seasons of eligibility beginning in 2010.

Clemons said he left Michigan because he was underutilized in the Wolverines' spread offense under coach Rich Rodriguez. Clemons had been recruited by former Michigan coach Lloyd Carr, who ran a pro-style offense. CU plans to run multiple sets.

"It's going to be real tough this season to not be out there with the guys playing," Clemons said. "But I'll go out there (in practice) and play hard every snap."

As a high school senior, Clemons was ranked as a national top-100 player by Internet recruiting sites. CU head coach Dan Hawkins, who also is handling receivers this season, said Clemons has been "awesome" thus far.

"He's such a great kid, very mature, very athletically gifted," Hawkins said. "We knew that because we had recruited him (out of high school), but he's really solid, really steady. We'll be looking forward to getting him going next year."

Return men.

Starters for punt and kickoff returns have not been set, Hawkins said. According to the precamp depth chart, tailbacks Rodney Stewart, Darrell Scott and Demetrius Sumler were listed

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for kickoff returns, and Stewart and wide receiver Jason Espinoza were on the punt-return list. But several others also are getting tryouts.

"We're getting a lot of guys reps. We'll kind of see who gets a feel for it," Hawkins said.

Footnotes.

According to Rivals.com, February signee Shaun Simon, a 6-2, 305-pound offensive lineman from Tulsa (Okla.) Union, did not meet NCAA Clearinghouse requirements and must attend a junior college for two years (likely Hutchinson Community College in Kansas) before playing for a Big 12 Conference school. Simon had hoped to grayshirt and enroll at CU in January. . . . Junior Corey Nabors is back with the tailbacks after getting a trial at wide receiver, running backs coach Darian Hagan said.

Tom Kensler, The Denver Post

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Longmont, Colorado
Tuesday, August 18, 2009

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Star recruit Kasa injured at practice

By Patrick Ridgell and Justin Williams
© 2009 Longmont Times-Call

BOULDER — Colorado freshman defensive end Nick Kasa suffered a knee injury during Monday morning's practice.

CU coach Dan Hawkins said the injury does not appear to be season ending, but added that Kasa will need to rehabilitate it. Hawkins refused to provide any details.

"He's got to get a little rehab," Hawkins said. "He'll be all right."

Asked how long Kasa might be out, Hawkins said, "Don't know that. Depends on how the rehab goes."

Kasa was not made available for comment following the afternoon practice, which he watched from the sideline. CU reported late Monday night that the injury was a sprained knee.

Kasa is expected to play as a true freshman this season after choosing the Buffs over Florida last year. He was the state's top-rated prospect.

The 6-foot-7, 267-pounder relies on his speed. He was a sprinter on the Legacy High track team in Thornton up until his senior season. He practiced with the track team as a senior but did not participate in the meets because, he said, they would have been too time-consuming.

EXTRA POINTS: Another day, and still no word on receiver Andre Simmons. ... Shaun Simon, a center from Tulsa, Okla., who signed with CU in February but was denied admission, will have to complete an associate degree before he can become a Buff. He'll attend, and play at, Hutchinson Community College in Kansas, according to Rivals.com. Simon previously said that he planned to greyshirt and enroll at CU in January. ... Hawkins liked the intensity he saw after a spirited practice Monday morning. "(Sunday) was basically one-sided, but (Monday) was a little more back and forth," he said. "The offense kind of came back with a little bit of vigor, and that was great to see." ... Hawkins said he's not near naming punt and kick returners. He said that in any given game, CU might use multiple returners. Jason Espinoza returned three punts in last Friday's scrimmage, while Brian Lockridge returned two kicks and Darrell Scott one. ... Hawkins called receiver Toney Clemons, a transfer from Michigan who must redshirt this year, "very mature, very athletically gifted." Hawkins said Clemons is handling the prospect of his upcoming year on the sideline "great."

Patrick Ridgell can be reached at pridgell@times-call.com. Justin Williams can be reached at jwilliams@times-call.com.



Bufs' Kasa out indefinitely with sprained knee

By Ryan Thorburn
Monday, August 17, 2009

BOULDER, Colo. — Dan Hawkins didn't want to talk about Nick Kasa's painful left leg injury.

However, Colorado's head coach was smiling and perhaps breathing a sigh of relief during a brief post-practice session with members of the media on Monday night.

The CU head coach reported that Kasa -- who was writhing on the ground in agony after sustaining the injury during Monday's morning practice -- did not sustain a season-ending knee injury. The 2009 recruiting class headliner is out indefinitely with a sprained knee.

"He's got to get a little rehab, but he'll be all right," Hawkins said.

That qualifies as good news considering Kasa's reaction after having the leg rolled on while engaged with an offensive lineman in a basic two-on-two blocking drill.

Last season the Buffs were cursed by season-ending injuries. Before the Nebraska game the list of key players out for the season had grown to nine -- Jason Brace (concussion), Benjamin Burney (knee), Drew Hudgins (knee), Jason Espinoza (collarbone), Mike Iltis (knee), Ryan Miller (fibula), Jon Major (knee), Rodney Stewart (leg/ankle) and Max Tuioti-Mariner (knee).

"Don't know that," Hawkins said when asked how long Kasa would be out.

Kasa watched the evening practice with his left leg wrapped and immobilized, but the state's top-rated recruit was not made available for comment. The coaching staff could consider redshirting the 6-foot7, 260-pound defensive end if he were to miss some games.

"He's going to have a chance to play like everybody else. I think all of those freshmen want to play right away," CU defensive line coach Romeo Bandison said recently when asked about Kasa's potential to impact the team as a true freshman. "They've still got to be able to do their job and produce. He has a good chance to do that. But we're not going to play him five snaps a game just to play him."

After last Thursday's scrimmage, Hawkins said Kasa -- the former Legacy High School standout who originally committed to defending national championship and preseason No. 1 Florida before switching to CU -- and classmates Nate Bonsu and Forrest West would all have a chance to be a part of the defensive line rotation this fall.

In other words, the Buffs are talented and inexperienced up front.

"Luckily, we're not set up on defense where the D-line has to carry the team," Bandison said. "It's 11 bodies and everyone has to be a part of it."

Notable

Overall, Hawkins has been very pleased with his team's effort through 17 practices of fall camp. "There's always one coach or one side that is never happy with the execution. That's always the case," he said. "I just think in terms of their effort and their tempo and all of that, it has been really good." ... Monday's evening practice concluded with the players having a home run contest using tennis rackets and tennis balls. Defensive tackle Curtis Cunningham won the derby. ... The Buffs will have one practice today, followed by a "team unity" function.

Quotable

"It comes and it goes so fast. School will be here before you know it and the next thing you know we'll be saying goodbye to the seniors," Hawkins said.



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sports

Bufs coach says Kasa's knee injury not serious

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

Posted: 08/18/2009 01:00:00 AM MDT



CU defensive end Nick Kasa, center, was injured Monday in practice. "He's got to get a little rehab, but he'll be all right," said CU coach Dan Hawkins. (Hyoung Chang, The Denver Post)

for the entire season, Buffaloes coach Dan Hawkins said.

CU spokesman David Plati called the injury a "sprained knee."

"He's got to get a little rehab, but he'll be all right," Hawkins said of Kasa, declining to elaborate on the nature or extent of the injury.

Asked about a time frame for Kasa's return, Hawkins said: "(We) don't know that. Depends on how rehab comes."

Kasa was injured during Monday's morning practice during a pass-rushing drill when an offensive lineman unintentionally rolled into his left side. A former all-stater at Legacy High School in Broomfield, Kasa initially

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BOULDER — A knee injury suffered Monday by Colorado freshman Nick Kasa will not keep the 6-foot-7, 260-pound defensive end off the field

gave an oral commitment to Florida but switched to CU about a month before signing day in February.

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Kasa was not made available for interviews after the afternoon practice.

During Thursday's intra-squad scrimmage at Folsom Field, Kasa recorded five tackles, including a sack. Hawkins has said Kasa is among four true freshmen with the best chance to contribute early this season, along with wide receiver Will Jefferson and defensive linemen Nate Bonsu and Forrest West.

*Tom Kensler: 303-954-1280 or
tkensler@denverpost.com*

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Longmont, Colorado
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Healed and ready to hit

Bufs' Polk rebounds from surgeries to make mark as defensive back

By Patrick Ridgell
© 2009 Longmont Times-Call

BOULDER — There was a time not too long ago when Colorado safety Ray Polk must have hated to sleep.

Sometimes he'd roll over in bed, and one of his shoulders would pop out of its socket. Other times, he'd jolt awake gasping for air. These were not restful nights.

But now, as he runs around CU's practice fields, Polk claims to feel like a much different person than he did just a few months ago. Coaches and teammates say the redshirt freshman from Scottsdale, Ariz., who's fighting for playing time, could have an impact on the program this fall.

"That guy has physical tools," senior linebacker Marcus Burton said. "He's athletic, fast. His dad (Raymond) played the position, so it's like it's in his blood. He looks good."

Said defensive coordinator Ron Collins: "Ray is a very talented kid. We haven't seen him on the field before, so I don't know if he's different, but it's refreshing to have him out here, because he does bring a presence. He's a big body that can run."

To recap Polk's medical adventures: He had surgeries over the past year to repair a torn labrum in each shoulder. The first one came in October, the second in late February. Polk said that when his shoulder dislocated eight times one night last fall, he knew there was a problem.

CU's medical staff took an MRI on his other shoulder, figuring it was loose, too. Polk isn't sure when he tore them, but thinks one happened while he was still in high school.

Shortly after his arrival from Arizona last year, Polk said he began having problems with sleep apnea. It's a disorder in which a person's breathing pauses or becomes very shallow as they sleep. Estimates say 20 million Americans suffer from it.

Polk said he snored "like a monster." Loud enough to keep his roommates awake. And then there was the toll it all took on him.

"It really took a toll on my grades and stuff," said Polk, who redshirted in 2008. "I was always tired. It hurt me in football, too. It was a good surgery to get. I definitely needed it."

To enable the flow of air, surgeons in May removed his uvula, the small piece of soft tissue that dangles from the soft palate over the back of the tongue. Or, as Polk described it, it's "the thing in cartoons when somebody is yelling that's dangling in the back."



Colorado's Ray Polk, left, and Corey Nabors run drills during the Buffaloes' fall camp in 2008. Polk has battled through several surgeries and a position change over the past year. **Kira**

Horvath/Times-Call

"I talked to the doctor, and he said he'd cut a little bit of that off so I'd have better air flow through there," Polk continued. "I got out of the surgery, and after a couple weeks, the scars were gone, and I looked back there and (my uvula) was gone."

What was more difficult to recover from? Polk said he lost 10 to 15 pounds after the sleep apnea surgery because he couldn't eat. But his first shoulder surgery was painful enough to require regular doses of pain killers. The point is: Neither was easy.

Polk said he came to CU as a running back with every intention of playing running back. Some time after his first shoulder surgery, he said he began to realize he could impact the program as a defensive back. His father played cornerback at Oklahoma State well enough to get drafted in 1985 by the then-Los Angeles Raiders.

Last spring, he decided to make the switch.

"I love to hit," he said. "I hate to get hit, but I love to hit." Now his challenge is much more mental.

"At safety, you have to know what everybody is doing in the secondary," Polk said. "It gets a little bit rough because every day, we're installing something new. You'll get a handle on something, and then you'll have something new you'll be focusing on, and then something old will come up and then you're like 'Wait, what do you do here?'"

CU coach Dan Hawkins figures Polk will handle the challenge.

"(He was) dealing with a lot of adversity," Hawkins said. "For him, one thing after another. And being a young guy, being a freshman, the position move, and battling through that, to his credit, he rallied in there. You get a little smooth water, you can start breathing a little easier and making some progress.

"That was hard on him."

Patrick Ridgell can be reached at
pridgell@times-call.com.

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GRIDIRON DOMINATION COMES IN 7 FLAVORS.

[CU's Kasa out with sprained knee](#)

August 18, 2009 8:42 AM

Posted by ESPN.com's Tim Griffin

Heralded Colorado freshman defensive end Nick Kasa is out indefinitely with a sprained knee he sustained in practice.

Colorado newspapers reported that Kasa was injured in practice Monday morning. Colorado coach Dan Hawkins was mum about the injury, other than to say it wouldn't be season ending.

"He's got to get a little rehab, but he'll be all right," Hawkins said.

Kasa was injured during a pass-rush drill when an offensive lineman unintentionally rolled into his left side.

The 6-foot-7, 260-pounder was one of the Buffaloes' top recruits after choosing to remain in his home state after a storied high school career at Legacy High School. Kasa originally committed to Florida, but made a late switch to Colorado shortly before signing day.

Hawkins has said that Kasa has been one of the Buffaloes' early standouts in practice and expected him to play as part of the team's rotation of defensive linemen.

If Kasa would be sidelined for an extended period of time, I would look for him to be redshirted. But at least the Buffaloes and Hawkins have the option of him potentially playing this season.

Because after the injury Monday morning, all were fearing the worst for a few hours.

[Colorado Buffaloes](#), [Nick Kasa](#), [Dan Hawkins](#), [Florida Gators](#)

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• Tim Griffin



Tim Griffin joined ESPN.com in Februar

2008. He has covered the Big 12 since its inception, among a variety of beats during a 24-year career at the San Antonio Express-News. Griffin, a Memphis State University graduate, lives in San Antonio with his wife and son.

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TUESDAY, AUGUST 18, 2009



Brutal slate awaits: Big Three in South on KU's schedule

By Eric Sorrentino

If the Kansas University football team is to win its first outright Big 12 North title this season, the Jayhawks will have to make history with a brutal conference schedule ahead of them.

For the second straight year, KU drew the big three from the Big 12 South: Oklahoma, Texas and Texas Tech. Two of the three (UT, TTU) are on the road.

By contrast, Nebraska, which is expected to finish atop the North standings with KU, doesn't face Texas this year. And the Cornhuskers drew Texas Tech and Oklahoma at home.

When comparing schedules, Nebraska is the favorite. Kansas, however, returns the most prolific quarterback in its history in Todd Reesing, along with the best group of receivers in the conference. Couple that with a date against Nebraska on Nov. 14 in Lawrence, and the Big 12 North is officially up for grabs.

Here's a look at KU's conference schedule in 2009, along with a few names to remember when preparing for the opposition:

Oct. 10: vs. Iowa State

Player to watch: Junior running back Alexander Robinson. If healthy, Robinson should surpass his 863 all-purpose yards (703 rushing) and six scores from last season. He only caught 17 passes, but new offensive coordinator Tom Herman, who previously held the same position at Rice, is expected to implement his spread attack, which will showcase heavy doses of Robinson in the running and receiving game. He's really the Cyclones' lone home run threat on offense.

The Jayhawks' offense should be able to feast on an ISU unit that ranked No. 116 of 119 Bowl Subdivision teams in pass defense last year.

Oct. 17: at Colorado

Player to watch: Sophomore running back Darrell Scott. The five-star recruit and the No. 1-rated Rivals.com freshman back in the nation was somewhat of a disappointment last year after rushing for just 343 yards and a touchdown. Injuries limited his productivity, but he's a prime breakout candidate this year with future NFL potential.

Colorado has the deepest corps of backs in the conference with sophomores Scott, Rodney Stewart and Brian Lockridge, to go along with junior Demetrius Sumler. With a quarterback battle between unproven signal callers Cody Hawkins and Tyler Hansen, the Buffaloes should focus a lot on their ground game this season.

Oct. 24: vs. Oklahoma

Player to watch: Junior quarterback Sam Bradford. Naturally, you're going to attract attention when you're the reigning Heisman Trophy winner coming off a season with 4,720 passing yards and a nation's-best 50 touchdown passes. Bradford, predicted by many to be a Top 5 NFL Draft pick this April, decided to return to school with a fire still burning inside him after OU's BCS Championship loss to Florida. He would have battled Matthew Stafford, who went on to sign a \$78 million contract with Detroit, for the No. 1 pick. Bradford should be a finalist again for the Heisman, and the Sooners are a consensus Top 5 team in the country this season.

The atmosphere in Lawrence should be electric for this game, particularly if the Jayhawks enter at 6-0, which is realistic. ESPN College GameDay, are you listening?

Oct. 31: at Texas Tech

Player to watch: Junior quarterback Taylor Potts. The Red Raiders have led the nation in passing six of the last seven years, so it's a good bet coach Mike Leach will continue to air it out, even without Graham Harrell and Michael Crabtree. Potts is next in line in the TTU quarterback factory, and at 6-foot-5, he's taller than any signal caller of the Leach era (2000-present). He reportedly has a better arm and can heave it downfield with more precision than Harrell.

Texas Tech won't be a Top 25 team to start the season like last year, but consider the Red Raiders haven't won fewer than eight games in a season since 2001.

Nov. 7: at Kansas State

Player to watch: Senior wide receiver Brandon Banks. He's arguably the most underrated player in the conference. Banks caught 67 passes for 1,049 yards and nine TD's last season, and he's a threat to take it the distance on kickoff returns, too. Most Lawrence High and Free State High receivers are bigger than Banks, who is listed a mere 5-7, 150 pounds.

One problem: With Josh Freeman gone, who's going to give Banks his touches, Carson Coffman or Daniel Thomas? Both are unproven.

Nov. 14: vs. Nebraska

Player to watch: Senior defensive tackle Ndamukong Suh. The KU offensive line is most likely going to want to double team Suh, who's already being projected the No. 2 overall pick in Todd McShay's 2010 NFL Draft. The 6-4, 300-pounder led an improved Nebraska defense last season in tackles (76) and sacks (7.5).

The Huskers should be a fringe Top 20 team to start the year. This game will be one of the most anticipated KU home games of the season and could decide the Big 12 North champion.

Nov. 21: at Texas

Player to watch: Senior quarterback Colt McCoy. He was the most accurate QB in the land last year, completing 76.67 percent of his passes, a NCAA record. McCoy was a finalist for the Heisman Trophy last year and is a front-runner to win the award this season.

The Longhorns didn't like being the odd man out in the South's three-way tie last year, and will likely use that as motivation in their quest to win a BCS Championship. Texas is a consensus Top 5 team in the country this season.

The Jayhawks, as good as they're supposed to be, will likely still be at least 14-point underdogs at Darrell Royal Memorial Stadium.

Nov. 28: vs. Missouri

in Kansas City, Mo.

Player to watch: Junior running back Derrick Washington. He rushed for 1,036 yards and 17 scores last year on a hurt left knee. With the absence of Chase Daniel, Jeremy Maclin and Chase Coffman, Washington quickly becomes the No. 1 option in the MU offense. Pressure rests on the arm of sophomore quarterback Blaine Gabbert, one of the most heralded recruits in Missouri history. But Washington should help him ease into a comfort zone in his first year running the offense.

Missouri, which won the North the last two years, won't be ranked to start the season and will be somewhat of a long shot to win the Big 12 North again in 2009.