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Late CU signee could be a keeper

By **TOM KENSLE** |  No Comments

While I've never even seen an Internet clip of his high school highlights, I get the feeling that adding safety Terrel Smith (5-feet-10, 185 pounds) to Colorado's football recruiting class more than two weeks after signing day will turn out to be a feel-good story.

Smith, from Passaic (N.J.) County Tech, has a bio that leads me to believe he is a ballplayer – having recorded 100 tackles and three interceptions on defense as a senior, along with rushing for 1,000 yards and 10 touchdowns on offense.

For defense, he earned third-team all-New Jersey honors. Those that believe those are rather modest credentials should know that New Jersey has become an absolute hotbed for football talent.

Did you know that the Garden State produced seven first-round selections in the 2009 NFL Draft? Yes, seven. One of the players from New Jersey high schools that went in the opening round was none other than Denver Broncos running back Knowshon Moreno (No. 12 pick, from the University of Georgia).

Others were Jacksonville Jaguars offensive tackle Eugene Monroe (No. 8, Virginia), Green Bay Packers defensive tackle B.J. Raji (No. 9, Boston College), New Orleans Saints cornerback Malcolm Jenkins (No. 14, Ohio State), Houston Texans linebacker Brian Cushing (No. 15, Southern Cal), Indianapolis Colts running back Donald Brown (No. 27, Connecticut) and Tennessee Titans wide receiver Kenny Britt (No. 30, Rutgers).

Smith joins another New Jersey native in CU's 2010 recruiting class, running back Tony Jones of Don Bosco Prep.

"I am going to Colorado and bring that 'New Jersey attitude,' " Smith told Rivals.com.

Smith believes he did not receive any offers on national signing day from major-college schools because his high school typically is not recruited heavily. Often, when a defensive back is overlooked it's because he lacks top-level speed, although Smith did run track. (New Jersey also is underrated in producing track athletes. Anybody remember Carl Lewis?).

We'll see what happens with Smith. My guess is he becomes a contributor, maybe even an impact player. I just get that feeling.

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Paige: Cage those roaming Buffaloes

By **Woody Paige**
The Denver Post

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The anticipation of and anxiety about that momentous 2012 football game in Boulder between the Colorado Buffaloes and the Utah Utes intensifies every day. Be still our hearts.

Shuck the Cornhuskers. The Buffs' passionate, obsessive border rivalry will be with the Utes.

If some imprudent people have their way.

The CU football program needs a lot of new things — one in particular — but it does not need a new conference. Be sane our minds.

What will be Colorado's slogan — "Go Buffs . . . and take Utah with you"?

CU joining the Michelob Ultra 12-Pac Conference is the worst idea since . . . the idea of CU joining the Pac-10 in 1994. The Colorado regents rejected the marriage proposal from the

Pac-10 before. But, like a scorned suitor, the conference appears ready to come calling again. Which part of "no" didn't the Pac-10 understand the first time?

The Buffaloes belong right where they are — the Big 12 Conference. Gives us Nebraska, Texas, Oklahoma, good old walkover Iowa State even, and they can keep their Washingtons and Washington States, and their Rick Neuheisels and Lane Kiffins, and their lame Ducks and dam Beavers, thank you.

A raging Internet internuts fire was fueled by Pac-10 commissioner Larry Scott recently when he said the conference will "start having serious analysis and serious conversations" about possible expansion. The Big Ten also is considering adding a school to get to 12, have two divisions and have a football championship game.

The Pac-10's television contract ends after the 2011-12 academic year, and the conference seeks to stick its tentacles into more major TV markets, initiate a lucrative championship football game and create its own revenue-producing network.

Thus, CU and Double U. Salt Lake City has the 31st TV market, Denver No. 16.

Frankly, the Pac-10 does not covet Boise State, UNLV, Fresno State or BYU. Texas would be at the top of the conference's wish list, but the Longhorns wisely won't leave the Big 12 and

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Oklahoma, Texas Tech and the others behind.

So, the Buffs will be No. 1 . . . in something.

When asked by reporters about switching to the Pac-10, CU athletic director Mike Bohn did not dismiss the possibility. He said he would be willing to listen, the same response Nebraska AD Tom Osborne offered when he was asked about the Huskers switching to the Big Ten.

The Buffaloes and the Cornhuskers can't bolt. What would they do without each other? NU must have CU to pick on, and CU must have NU to poke at. This is a real rivalry — not Colorado-Utah or Nebraska-Illinois. You don't take turkey and stuffing away from Thanksgiving, and you don't take the Buffs and the Huskers away from the day after. And, surely, someday both will become relevant nationally again.

CU is scheduled to play Utah in 2012 (Boulder) and 2013 (Salt Lake City), and that's fine, in September as a nonconference game.

It has been suggested that Colorado should jump because of the "cultural, academic and philosophical" similarities to Pac-10 schools. The Republic of Boulder has no cultural and philosophical comparisons to any other place in the world.

Academically, CU might match Stanford, but USC and Oregon State? According to a highly placed CU source, the school relaxed its qualifying standards to allow running back Darrell Scott to

enroll, and one of the reasons he departed was "because he had troubles handling" the academics.

Submit Your Question



The Denver Post's
Woody Paige



Post sports columnist Woody Paige fields your questions. Look for Woody's Mailbag on Thursdays.

Oregon State has a major in exercise and sports science. Before Colorado dumped its phys ed major, the Buffs won a national title.

If Colorado joined the Pac-10, it supposedly could recruit better in California; its alums would travel more; the team would gain additional national publicity and the Buffs would be play in superior locales.

Pullman, Corvallis and Eugene are not upgrades over Lincoln, Lawrence and Norman, and the Rockies finally are escaping from Tucson. As the song goes, "I'll Take Manhattan." CU alums don't travel; CU can't recruit its own state, and should be recruiting Texas, and the Buffs would receive all the national publicity they deserve if they won more than three games.

Besides, the Buffs would be aligned in a division

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with Washington, Washington State, Oregon, Oregon State and, likely, Utah. Where's the improvement? USC and the other South Division teams would visit Boulder once every four years.

CU, a member of its conference since the original Big Seven, should continue to pledge allegiance to the Big 12.

ReBuff the gobbling PacMen.

Woody Paige: 303-954-1095 or
wpaige@denverpost.com

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