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CU-CSU players have started their combine

By **JEFF LEGWOLD** |  No Comments

The NFL's scouting combine begins in earnest today for Colorado tight end [Riar Geer](#) ^[1] as well as Colorado State offensive linemen Shelley Smith and Cole Pemberton.

The three were among the first groups of players to arrive in Indianapolis Wednesday when they went through orientation as well as their preliminary medical exam.

But today things pick up for the three as they go through the most stringent medical exam they have ever experience with doctors representing all 32 NFL teams getting a chance to look them over. They begin their interviews with team officials as well today.

Their on-field workouts will come Saturday, just before they leave Indianapolis. USC's Jeff Byers, a Fort Collins native and Loveland High School graduate, is also among the offensive linemen as well.

The combine runs through Tuesday overall, but players are divided into position groups which go through the event in four-day increments.

The last groups — two defensive back groups — arrive Saturday and leave Tuesday.

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[1] Riar Geer: <http://blogs.denverpost.com/broncos/tag/riar-geer/>

Hansen aims to fire up CU

Quarterback working to become more vocal leader on gridiron

By Kyle Ringo Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 02/26/2010 12:21:13 AM MST

Tyler Hansen is beginning to feel at home as the starting quarterback for the Colorado football team, and he's ready to fight to keep the job when spring practices begin in eight days.

Hansen replaced Cody Hawkins under center at Texas in Game 5 last season and kept the job the remainder of the year. He said this offseason has felt different because he has carried more responsibility and is receiving more respect within the program.

"I feel like the team is kind of rallying behind me," Hansen said. "I feel like I'm getting more leadership. Guys are listening to me more. I feel like the coaches have more respect for me. I can go up there and speak my mind without them judging me or being like, 'You're a young guy. What have you done?'"

"I feel like I've proven myself on the field and off the field to earn the leadership I have right now."

Hansen said coaches have told him the starting job is, essentially, his to lose. Hawkins, the Buffs' all-time leader in touchdown passes and interceptions, remains Hansen's primary competition this spring.

But there are other quarterbacks in the mix.

Wide receiver Scotty McKnight said true freshman quarterback Nick Hirschman has looked good in seven-on-seven work this winter and will be a solid player once he catches up on the mental side of the game. When that happens, usually depends on the individual. Walk-on Seth Lobato also is expected to get practice repetitions under center.

Meanwhile, redshirt freshman Clark Evans and true freshman Josh Moten, both of whom were recruited to CU as quarterbacks a year ago, appear ticketed for other positions. No position changes have been announced by the coaching staff but players said Evans has been working at tight end and Moten has been playing cornerback in seven-on-seven.

Hansen said he expects Hawkins to be on top of his game this spring as he prepares for his senior season, which should spur improvement from him.

"If you look at the depth chart, I'm No. 1, but I've still got to earn it," Hansen said. "I've still got to go out there and have a good spring."

Hawkins continues to deny interview requests, as was the case at the end of last season.

Hansen said he hopes coaches announce a starting quarterback at the conclusion of spring ball because he believes it's best for the team to go through summer workouts, when coaches are not allowed to be involved, with a clear-cut leader.

Hansen formed that opinion after last summer when he and Hawkins shared the leadership role throughout the summer because coaches refused to name a starter coming out of spring and indicated competition between Hansen and Hawkins was close.

Hansen said his primary focus over the past three months has been studying film of last season, identifying his mistakes and trying to get better. He said he hopes to do a better job of getting the ball out of his hands quicker and improve timing with his receivers.

"I expect a battle," Hansen said. "I expect it to be, maybe, a little more intense than last year, not because it's going to be a different situation but because we have more guys this year, more skill guys. So the quarterbacks will be able to make more plays."

Spending the winter as the incumbent starter has led to changes for Hansen. He said he is beginning to become more vocal with his teammates and plans to continue. He said the Colorado locker room needs more players who are willing to speak their mind.

"If we want change, this is the time right now. We need to do something," Hansen said. "The last couple years we've had kind of quiet guys, just lead by example and that hasn't worked for us. So I think our coaches are maybe looking for something new. I think that's the thing we need is more fire."

Hansen said new wide receivers coach and passing game coordinator Robert Prince has added some fire to the coaching staff.

"He will get in your face a little bit, which is good," Hansen said.

Slow starts and a lack of emotion played a part in CU going 3-9 last season. The Buffs were outscored in the first quarter 92-34 in 2009 and held a lead after the opening quarter only three times.

One former Buff who was in the locker room at halftime of the season-opening loss to Colorado State last season said it was the most lifeless halftime locker room he had ever seen. Hansen said he expects that to change in 2010.

"I'm starting to get more vocal, just because I think our team kind of demands it out of me," Hansen said. "We have a lot of guys who are kind of quiet and I think we kind of need that guy who will be a motivator and get in your face. ...The more guys who are like that, the more intensity we will have and the more fire we will have. I think we've missed the fire, especially the past two years. We haven't been having a lot of fire."

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