

Bufs set to return to spring practice

Players return to gridiron after 10-day layoff for spring break

By Kyle Ringo Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

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Dan Hawkins began spring football practices with three major points of emphasis in mind. He wanted to work on the running game and turnovers on both sides of the ball and improve in every aspect of the kicking game.

As the Bufs return to work today following a week off for spring break, there is plenty of room for improvement in all three areas and elsewhere based on the first seven sessions earlier this month.

When we left the Bufs following the first scrimmage of spring 10 days ago, Hawkins was talking about cleaning things up. There are eight practices remaining to get the job done, including the April 10 spring game at Folsom Field.

"Again, I'm going to harp a lot on the turnovers," he told the school's official Web site prior to spring ball. "I'm going to harp a lot on the penalties ... harp a lot on all the little things that just make a good football team."

He has been true to his word with officials throwing flags at every practice and players running post-practice sprints based on the number of mistakes made by either the offense or the defense.

Ron Collins' defense, which appears to be creating more turnovers, getting to the quarterback and stopping the run, has definitely done less running to this point than Eric Kiesau's offense. Whether that is a product of overall improvement by the defense or a reflection of where the offense stands remains to be seen.

Regardless of how the remainder of spring practices go, players will return to the locker room, meetings and practices in four months to prove themselves all over again in fall camp in August. Spring ball isn't so much about establishing a pecking order on the depth chart as it is about preparing players to give themselves a chance to contribute in the fall.

Cody Hawkins might be leading the quarterback competition, Michael Sipili might be the starting middle linebacker and Aric Goodman might be the place-kicker when spring ball ends in 12 days, but it doesn't mean they will open the season in the starting lineup against Colorado State in September.

"I've got to find some depth, but that's what spring ball is all about," longtime linebackers coach Brian Cabral said earlier this spring.

If Colorado has anything working in its favor as it tries to improve from a 3-9 record in 2009, it might be that there appears to be plenty of talented young players on the roster with an opportunity to make their mark.

Players such as wide receiver Will Jefferson, linebacker Jon Major and defensive back Parker Orms already have taken advantage of the increased repetitions this spring. All three could be starters and would definitely be heavy contributors if the season began today.

What other young players will join them?

Keep an eye on walk-on running back Quentin Hildreth, tight ends DaVaughn Thornton and Clark Evans, offensive lineman Eric Richter, defensive lineman Nick Kasa, linebackers Liloa Nobriga and Derrick Webb and defensive backs Deji Olatoye and Paul Vigo. All have had their moments in the first portion of spring drills and could be in the mix when the lights come on in the fall.

CU spring schedule

March 29 -- 2:30 p.m. meetings, 4-6 p.m. practice, pads

March 30 -- 2:30 p.m. meetings, 4-6 p.m. practice, pads

April 1 -- 2:30 p.m. meetings, 4-6 p.m. practice, pads

April 2 -- 2:30 p.m. meetings, 4 p.m. scrimmage, pads

April 5 -- 2:30 p.m. meetings, 4-6 p.m. practice, pads

April 6 -- 2:30 p.m. meetings, 4-6 p.m. practice, pads-NT

April 8 -- 2:30 p.m. meetings, 4-6 p.m. practice, shorts-helmets

April 10 -- Spring game, 1:30 p.m.

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MARCH 29, 2010, 8:38 AM

CU football's spring drills resume for second half

By **TOM KENSLE** |  1 Comment

I thought it was strange and a bit awkward for Colorado to schedule its spring football practices around spring break — primarily because other colleges I had covered never did it that way.

But I have come around to thinking it's a terrific idea.

Two weeks of workouts before the break, two weeks after. As with a college basketball game or football game there's a halftime. The break gives everybody an opportunity to catch their breath. And coaches have time to evaluate the first two weeks and do some tweaking in formulating a practice plan for the second half.

Practice resumes this afternoon, beginning at 4. The workouts are on the CU practice fields, north of Boulder Creek. They are open to the public, with the understandable restrictions of no photography, no taking notes, no use of cell phones.

For those that can leave the office early, the remaining afternoon practices are as follows: Today, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday (scrimmage), April 5, April 6 and April 8. Those all begin at 4 p.m.

The April 10 spring game at Folsom Field will have a 1:30 kickoff.

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