



Kendrick Celestine hopes to make improvement before the spring game on April 10.  
Photo Courtesy: CUBuffs.com



03/29/2010 B.G. Brooks, Contributing Editor

## Brooks: Celestine Battles To Overcome Early Bad Break

**BOULDER** - The Colorado Buffaloes need a strong push in their final two weeks of spring football drills, and no player is hoping to push harder between now and the spring game than Kendrick Celestine.

Seeking to make an immediate impression in early practices, the junior receiver suffered a broken right ring finger on the second day of practice. It wasn't the kind of start he dreamed of during his time away from football.

"That made me drop a couple of balls (and) kind of upset me," said Celestine, a 2007 scholarship signee who left the team for personal reasons the following year but since has regained his academic eligibility, worked his way back onto the roster and reclaimed his scholarship.

"I'm definitely trying to get a push in the last two weeks (the spring game is Saturday, April 10)," he continued. "The first two weeks were OK, but I didn't do anything as good as I can. I'm really going to try and step it up."

### BUFFALO EXTRAS



**Watch:**  
Spring Practice 3 29 10  
03/30/2010

Celestine said last week's spring break - the Buffs were off for 10 days before resuming practice Monday afternoon - afforded his finger additional time to heal. Rather than wearing a splint, he's practicing with the third finger taped to his middle finger for support.

"The first two weeks were OK, but it was still kind of like a learning process for me," he said. "I was making sure before every practice I was studying the playbook a day ahead of time. But it was just the finger that was really messing me up. I dropped a couple of easy balls, which made me kind of get down on myself.

"But it still felt real good just to be back out there with my teammates and to be back in a football atmosphere."

Celestine, of Mamou, La., was eager to show well for new receivers coach Robert Prince, who succeeded head coach Dan Hawkins at the position. So despite the broken finger, Celestine continued to practice and continued trying to make receptions.

"The (broken) finger hurt him," Prince conceded. "The first couple of weeks, with his hand, were disappointing (for him) because he'd get himself open and then wouldn't finish the play. But I didn't want to let that be an excuse for him, that he wasn't catching it because of the finger."

Celestine didn't want it to be an excuse either. But in addition to the injury, Prince said Celestine needs more polish at what is still a relatively new position.

"I still think this is new for him," Prince said. "He was a quarterback in high school, a 'wildcat' kind of guy. There's things he definitely still learning; but he's very willing to learn, he's working at it."

Celestine's impression of Prince mirrors that of the other Buffs receivers: "He's a very inspiring guy . . . very motivated. He lets me know me what I'm doing with my details. I really like him."

Although he has been getting most of his work with a No. 3 group of receivers, Celestine isn't concerning himself with spring depth charts.

"I'm just trying to make sure I do everything right, get all my assignments right," he said.

As for CU's other receivers, Prince saw enough of them over the first seven practices to believe "we'll have a solid group." He said junior transfer Toney Clemons (Michigan) "will be a big asset for us. He's shown good hands and the ability to catch in traffic."

His take was very similar on junior Markques Simas: "He's got a great knack of how to get open and creating separation. He's also strong in a crowd; someone can be right on his back and he's still making the play."

Senior Scotty McKnight suffered a lower leg/foot injury in the first spring scrimmage and immediately afterwards was on crutches and wore a protective boot. However, his injury wasn't as severe as initially believed and he said Monday he was recovering quickly.

Hawkins said McKnight told him he might even practice Monday, but that didn't happen. Still, Hawkins didn't discount CU's leading receiver returning before spring drills end.

"He's a tough guy; I really like him," Prince said. "He's very smart and has a knack for getting open, knowing how to attack a defender's leverage and creating space. And he has really good hands."

Of the receivers he wasn't able to see on tape when he was prepping for spring drills, Prince said walk-on Kyle Cefalo was impressive before spring break: "He's been good with the ball in his hands and running the sweeps."

**CU-CSU KICKOFF SET:** CU's 2010 season-opener against Colorado State (Sept. 4, Invesco Field at Mile High) will begin at noon and be televised on The Mtn. The game returns to Denver after being played in Boulder last season. Since 1998, only three games in the fierce intrastate rivalry have not been played in Denver. The 2004, 2005 and 2009 games were played in Boulder.

**KEEPING IT SIMPLE:** Prior to spring drills, offensive coordinator/quarterbacks coach Eric Kiesau said the theme on his side of the ball would be overall simplicity and becoming as polished as possible while adhering to a pared-down playbook.

Prince, who doubles as the passing game coordinator, believes that goal is being met without sacrificing the amount of offense needed to avoid becoming predictable.

"There's always the fine line of (having) enough offense," he said. "Is it simple enough or are you missing the details? I think that's one thing we've trying to do - be detailed on the things that we've been installing. We've actually really slowed down our install, just so we get a lot of repetition on the stuff we're doing."

**BUFF BITS:** After the 10-day layoff, Hawkins described Monday's early work as "sluggish," but said the Buffs "picked it up" as the practice progressed . . . Hawkins said he spent his spring break visiting his grandson in Boise, Idaho, and also said he paid visits to other programs undergoing spring work . . . While Hawkins was non-committal on the fall status of junior defensive back/receiver Anthony Wright, who is out of spring drills due to a knee injury, he said sophomore Steven Hicks (academics) would not return in the fall . . . Former Buffs linebacker Ron Woolfork, now the head coach at Denver East, attended Monday's practice. Three of Woolfork's former players - running back Quentin Hildreth, tight end DaVaughn Thornton and kicker/punter Zach Grossnickle - currently are on the CU roster.

**Contact:** [BG.Brooks@Colorado.EDU](mailto:BG.Brooks@Colorado.EDU)

SHOW MENU



# denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

cu football

## CU's Celestine stocked with strong desire for comeback

By Tom Kensler  
*The Denver Post*

Posted: 03/30/2010 01:00:00 AM MDT



Kendrick Celestine, showing the result of Colorado's game against Alabama in the 2007 Independence Bowl in Shreveport, La., is back to trying to catch attention as a CU receiver after leaving the Buffs in 2008. (John Leyba, The Denver Post)

BOULDER — Kendrick Celestine can joke that he knows precisely how long it takes to stock a shelf in a Wal-Mart, but regaining his timing on pass routes during Colorado's spring football drills is a work in progress.

It's said that timing is the first thing to go. The junior wideout quit the Buffaloes two games into the 2008 season and was away from football for 18 months. But he's not far removed from being a stocker at a Wal-Mart in Lafayette, La., or, more recently, at a Boulder grocery.

If that won't cause a young father to pause and, well, take stock of his life, nothing will.

"This is a whole lot more fun than bagging groceries," Celestine said Monday after a two-hour practice. "But I do feel like I'm a little rusty. I'm like slipping out of my breaks once in a while. I don't feel like I have my feet underneath me. I'll be working on that all summer."

Celestine cited "personal reasons" for his decision to walk away from the team, including the pressures of being an expectant father. Celestine also told reporters at the time he was disappointed with his playing time. He now realizes he expected too much, too soon. Celestine caught 11 passes for 151 yards in 2007 as a freshman and had five receptions in two games as a sophomore before quitting.

"I came in big-headed as a freshman," he recalled. "But now I see the other side of it. I'm now more into the team success instead of my

Advertisement

**Kodak**

IF YOU'RE NOT PRINTING ON A KODAK ESP ALL-IN-ONE PRINTER, CHANCES ARE  
**YOU'RE PAYING TOO MUCH FOR INK.**

FIND OUT HOW MUCH YOU'RE OVERPAYING FOR INK AT [PRINTANDPROSPER.COM](http://PRINTANDPROSPER.COM)

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

# denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

own personal success."

Celestine returned to Boulder in the spring of 2009 and decided to get settled — yes, with a stocking job — before contacting CU coach Dan Hawkins, although he had been spotted around campus by his former teammates.

Celestine told Hawkins all he wanted was another chance. A deal was made. If Celestine paid his way for the summer and fall semesters, regained his eligibility and fulfilled other obligations, Hawkins would consider allowing him back on the team.

On Christmas Eve,

**Blog: All Things Buffs**



The Post's Tom Kensler posts analysis, notes and minutiae on this blog devoted to CU athletics.

Hawkins phoned Celestine with news he would be back on scholarship for the spring semester. Celestine, who now has been joined in Boulder by his girlfriend and their son, said he had never received a better Christmas present.

"It was good to see him come back," junior running back Brian Lockridge said. "It happens to some guys. You go through a process where you don't know what you want to do. He went home for a little bit and realized what life's all about."

"It's not about telling people where something is on a shelf, I know that," Celestine said.

A dinged finger during the first week of spring drills has slowed Celestine's progress. Hawkins said the Louisianan "has some talent. But he also has more competition out there than he had before, and he needs to keep battling."

New wide receivers coach Robert Prince said Celestine's quickness and ability to separate from the defender "is where he might bring something to the table."

Celestine said he is not trying to get ahead of himself and just wants to make the most of his second chance.

"I'm going to work hard to be the best player I can," he said. "But even if I don't make it to the pro level, just getting a degree from Colorado will make me successful."

## Footnotes.

Sophomore defensive tackle Nate Bonsu, who had offseason surgery to repair torn meniscus in his left knee, is sitting out spring camp but said he will be ready for August drills. . . . Hawkins said Monday's first practice after spring break

Advertisement



Offer valid on tax preparation fees only. Does not apply to financial products, online tax preparation product or other services. Present coupon at time of tax preparation. Valid at participating locations only and may not be combined with other offers. Most offices independently owned and operated.

**\$25  
off**

## Tax Preparation

Simply present this offer to your Jackson Hewitt® tax preparer and **SAVE \$25** on income tax preparation!

EXPIRES 4/30/10. COUPON CODE: **2QELU**

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™



# denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

"looked sluggish at the start, but they picked it up toward the end." . . . Hawkins said cornerback Steven Hicks is no longer on the team.

Tom Kensler: 303-954-1280 or  
[tkensler@denverpost.com](mailto:tkensler@denverpost.com)

Advertisement



UNIVERSITY of  
SAN FRANCISCO

**End-to-End Training as It Should Be: 100% ONLINE!**

**Earn Your Master Certificate in Internet Marketing**

- SEO & Paid Search
- Online Branding
- Web Analytics
- Internet Law
- Media Buying
- Social Media

➔ 1-800-268-9943  
[USanFranOnline.com/FD](http://USanFranOnline.com/FD)

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

---

**All Things Colorado Sports — Blogs — The Denver Post**

---

MARCH 29, 2010, 2:55 PM

## CU's Bonsu to be ready for August

By **TOM KENSLE** |  No Comments

I bumped into Colorado sophomore-to-be defensive tackle Nate Bonsu on Monday and the Dallas native said he couldn't be more excited about getting back on the playing field — although it won't be until August.

Bonsu, who drew substantial playing time last fall as a true freshman, underwent offseason surgery to repair a torn meniscus in his left knee.

"The rehab, everything, it's on schedule," Bonsu said. "But I've got to get my quad back. My leg's skinny now. I'm just doing everything I can, everything I need to."

Bonsu, 6-feet-2 and 295 pounds, said he had never suffered a football injury that kept him off the field.

"It's frustrating not being out there because you see how much fun they have," Bonsu said. "But this is reality. I just need to keep doing everything I can."

As bad luck would have it, Bonsu suffered the injury during a drill after the season.

"It's just something that happened," he said.

### You might be interested in:

- [CU's Bzdelik looking for three](#) <sup>[1]</sup>
- [Coach Hawkins ready to tackle questions from Buffs football fans](#) <sup>[2]</sup>
- [CU's Great Wide Hope](#) <sup>[3]</sup>

### All Things Colorado Sports Recommends

- [Salei in, Liles out for game tonight](#) (All Things Colorado Avalanche)
- [Goose ready for your questions](#) (All Things Rockies)



---

ARTICLE PRINTED FROM ALL THINGS COLORADO SPORTS

<http://blogs.denverpost.com/sports/2010/03/29/cus-bonsu-to-be-ready-for-august/>

URLs in this post:

[1] CU's Bzdelik looking for three: [http://blogs.denverpost.com/sports/2010/03/29/cus-bzdelik-looking-for-three/?source=ARK\\_sports](http://blogs.denverpost.com/sports/2010/03/29/cus-bzdelik-looking-for-three/?source=ARK_sports)

[2] Coach Hawkins ready to tackle questions from Buffs football fans: [http://blogs.denverpost.com/sports/2010/03/29/coach-hawkins-ready-to-tackle-questions-from-buffs-football-fans/?source=ARK\\_sports](http://blogs.denverpost.com/sports/2010/03/29/coach-hawkins-ready-to-tackle-questions-from-buffs-football-fans/?source=ARK_sports)

[3] CU's Great Wide Hope: [http://blogs.denverpost.com/sports/2010/03/30/cus-great-wide-hope/?source=ARK\\_sports](http://blogs.denverpost.com/sports/2010/03/30/cus-great-wide-hope/?source=ARK_sports)

[Print page](#)[Close window](#)

Longmont, Colorado  
Wednesday, April 07, 2010

Publish Date: 3/30/2010

## CU's McKnight healing

Receiver: Scrimmage injury is 'real minor'

*By Patrick Ridgell*  
© 2010 Longmont Times-Call

BOULDER — Last time we saw Colorado receiver Scotty McKnight, things didn't look so good.

On Monday, they were better. McKnight, CU's leading receiver each of the past three seasons, said he tore a small section of ligament in his left ankle and chipped a small piece of left fibula in a fall late in March 18's scrimmage. He wore a boot on his left foot while watching Monday's first practice since that scrimmage. Last week was spring break.

McKnight called the injury "real minor." He added he believes he could play if the Buffs had a game Saturday. He said he'll be re-evaluated after this week to determine his range of motion.

Head coach Dan Hawkins said he thought there was a chance McKnight could return before spring drills conclude April 10. But because he's a fifth-year senior who's a known entity in the program and someone who knows the offense, McKnight said it's "looking like" he will not.



CU's Scotty McKnight makes a 22-yard reception against Nebraska during a November 2009 game at Folsom Field in Boulder. **Lewis Geyer/Times-Call**

"I've played with a sprained ankle that's probably worse than how this feels right now," he said.

"They're going to keep me in the boot. I'm going to do a ton of rehab upstairs and get ready just so I can go into this offseason full speed and be at my best for next year.

"They want to make sure the bone heels 100 percent and it's not an issue that would be nagging come next year."

McKnight suffered a broken fibula and chipped tibia almost exactly three years before his new injury. He did not return for the rest of that spring.

McKnight said he immediately heard a pop March 18 when he made a catch, jumped over the chain marker on the sideline and landed awkwardly while being tackled. The pop prompted belief he had suffered a similar injury.

"It's unfortunate that it happened, but better that it's that than something more severe, because the way I landed, it was pretty nasty," McKnight said.

**CODY SPEAKS:** Senior quarterback Cody Hawkins, who is battling Tyler Hansen for the starting spot, spoke Monday with a reporter from ESPN.com. But he declined an interview request from the Times-Call after practice. CU's sports information department reported that Hawkins, son of head coach Dan Hawkins, is "uncomfortable talking with reporters he feels have been attacking his dad."

CU reported Monday that Cody's decision to not speak is solely his. Cody started CU's first four games of 2009 before



being pulled in the conference opener against Texas. He played to run the 2- minute drill at Kansas State on Oct. 24, and when Hansen was injured at Oklahoma State on Nov. 19. He did not speak after either game.

**GAME TIME:** The Mountain West Conference announced Monday that CU's season opener against Colorado State at Invesco Field in Denver will start at noon Saturday, Sept. 4, and air on the mtn.

So far, CU's first 11 games are scheduled to be played on Saturdays. Last year, the Buffs had two Thursday games, two Friday games and one on a Sunday.

**EXTRA POINT:** Dan Hawkins said defensive back Anthony Wright, who's out for spring following knee surgery, might be back in the fall. "We'll have to see what's going on with his knee," the coach said. ... Hawkins said defensive back Steven Hicks will not return to the program. CU lists Hicks out for spring due to academics. ... Hawkins called the first practice since March 18 "sluggish to start, but we picked it up toward the end." ... The coach said receiver Kendrick Celestine is rusty and battling more competition than he faced during his previous stint as a Buff. Celestine is making a comeback this spring after he quit early in the 2008 season. ... Hawkins said freshman defensive back Parker Orms has a "15-pound heart." ... Hawkins said he visited some other football programs during spring break but didn't say which ones. Read Patrick Ridgell's CU sports blog at [www.timescall.com/blogs/ridgell](http://www.timescall.com/blogs/ridgell). He can be reached at [pridgell@times-call.com](mailto:pridgell@times-call.com).