



Jeff Smart, left, and Marcus Burton, right, remain hopeful of landing free agent contracts, as Riar Geer, center, did with Denver.
Photo Courtesy: CUBuffs.com



05/05/2010 B.G. Brooks, Contributing Editor

Burton, Smart Still Searching For A Place To Land

BOULDER - It's on to Plan B for Marcus Burton and Jeff Smart.

The pair of former University of Colorado linebackers said Tuesday that while their weekend minicamp tryouts were encouraging, the NFL teams they auditioned with did not sign them to free agent contracts.

Burton worked out with the New York Jets during their four-day camp in Morristown, N.J., while Smart got his look from the Cleveland Browns in Berea, Ohio.

Burton said Jets officials told him there was "a possibility" of him being brought back. He also said there has been some interest shown in him by the Indianapolis Colts.

Smart was told by the Browns "they would be in touch if they needed me," he said. He added there is a possibility of him attending another minicamp this weekend, mentioning the New Orleans Saints and the Baltimore Ravens.

"I thought the camp went pretty good . . . they actually did a lot of things I had expected," Burton said. "There were drills I had done with (position coach Brian) Cabral. I really think I gained some confidence from being there; it helped me realize I can play at that level and be effective."

If Burton, who graduates Friday, does not catch on with an NFL team, he said he might explore the possibility of playing in Canada or overseas.

"I just want to see where I'm at before making that decision," he said.

Smart also said he was familiar with everything the Browns asked of him: "I thought I picked up everything pretty well. Their practices were pretty short and to the point."

Unlike Burton, Smart was non-committal about playing elsewhere if something in the NFL doesn't materialize.

"I'm really not sure about that," he said. "I'll make a decision later on if that's presented to me."

While CU did not have a player selected in the recent NFL draft, four former Buffs signed free agent contracts - tight ends Riar Geer (Broncos) and Patrick Devenny (Seahawks), defensive back Ben Burney (Browns) and long-snapper Justin Drescher (Falcons).

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Saluting seven star striders

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From left:
Adam
Goucher
(2001), Elva
Dryer (2003),
Shayne
Culpepper
(2004) and
PattieSue
Plumer
(1996).
Getty Images
file photos

The Colorado Running Hall of Fame will welcome seven new members in a celebration at the Denver Athletic Club tonight, beginning at 5 p.m. Admission is free.

THE INDUCTEES

Herb Lindsay: Dominant road racer of the late 1970s and early 1980s, running for the Frank Shorter Racing Team. Achievements include what was then a world record in the half marathon (1 hour, 1 minute, 47 seconds) and an American record for 25 kilometers. Lindsay was an All-American at Michigan State before packing his belongings in a car with his new wife and moving to Boulder in 1978. Today he is a physical education teacher in Fremont, Mich.

Adam Goucher: Ran for Doherty High School in Colorado Springs and won the national Foot Locker cross country title in 1993. In 1998, he became the second Colorado Buffalo to win an NCAA cross country title, and he helped usher in an era when CU produced three more individual NCAA cross country champions and five team titles. Won three NCAA track titles, two U.S. outdoor 5,000-meter titles and three U.S. cross country titles. Ran the 5,000 meters at the 2000 Olympics.

Elva Dryer: Two-time Olympian who grew up in Durango and competed for Western State, where she won two NCAA Division II cross country titles and five NCAA track titles. Four-time USATF national champion on the road and won the 2005 Bolder Boulder. Member of eight USATF international teams.

Shayne Culpepper: A walk-on at CU who became a two-time Olympian and bronze medalist at the world indoor championships in 2004 (3,000 meters). Won the 5,000 meters at the 2004 Olympic Trials. Won three other USATF track titles and a USATF cross country title in 2003.

Danny Reese: Ranked among the top 10 Americans in the steeplechase for eight consecutive years and member of 12 USATF international teams. Bronze medalist at the 1995 Pan Am Games, two-time All-American at CU and 1987 Big Eight champion. Coached seven Colorado state prep champions at alma mater

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Wheat Ridge High School and was named 1988 cross country coach of the year.

John Meyer, The Denver Post

PattieSue Plumer: Graduate of Montrose High School and Stanford who was a two-time Olympian (1988, 1992) in the 1,500 and 3,000 meters and was renowned for her determination in multiple comebacks. A broken leg suffered when she was struck by a taxi cab in Japan cost her nine months in 1985. A bout of pneumonia in 1987 nearly killed her. In 1991 she finished 12th in a world championships 1,500 despite being bitten by a dog before the race.

Mike Sandroek: Longtime Boulder running journalist and author of two books: "Running with the Legends" and "Running Tough." Has run with virtually every great runner who has passed through Boulder and has the wheels to do it with a 10K personal best of 30:23. Collects used running shoes and clothing to send to impoverished Africans (One World Running).

Previous inductees:

* 2007: Frank Shorter, Pat Porter, Joe Vigil, Colleen De Reuck, Jon Sinclair, Lorraine Moller, Ted Castaneda.

* 2008: Steve Jones, Mark Plaatjes, Arturo Barrios, Ellen Hart, Tony Sandoval, Melody Fairchild, Steve Bosley.

* 2009: Benji Durden, Alan Culpepper, Rich Castro, Maureen Custy-Roben, Kim Jones, Stan Mavis, Creigh Kelley.

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