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CU Buffs Drescher wiser after 2007 debacle at Iowa State

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

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BOULDER — Justin Drescher should have known what was coming Tuesday when the senior snapper was surrounded by reporters after Colorado's practice.

Long snappers tend to receive interview requests only in times of controversy, disaster or, in this case, to provide some historical perspective as the Buffaloes (3-6, 2-3 Big 12) prepare for a road trip to Iowa State (5-5, 2-4) this weekend.

Two years ago, in CU's most recent visit to Ames, Drescher was involved, front and center, in the bizarre ending to a 31-28 Cyclones victory. Colorado appeared to send that game into overtime, but officials disallowed successful field goals by Kevin Eberhart from 50 and 55 yards within the final second of regulation.

Explanatory quotes from an official, provided after the game by Iowa State sports information, stated that the first Eberhart field goal was waved off because Drescher snapped the ball before it was set. That was ruled a delay-of-game penalty.

Backed up 5 yards, Eberhart again booted the ball through the uprights, but another flag was thrown. This time, officials ruled that Drescher failed to snap the ball before the final second had elapsed.

"You've got to be ready for everything," Drescher said Tuesday. "Officials control the game. You can't do anything about the calls. You just have to play."

Wide receiver Scotty Mc-Knight, then a freshman, was the holder. "I just stood there with Justin and we couldn't believe what happened," he said. "That was a tough one for me."

Because of that 2007 debacle in Ames, Colorado spends time every Friday working scenarios involving last-second field-goal attempts.

"We had two very unusual plays, back to back," coach Dan Hawkins said Tuesday during his weekly media luncheon. "You always put it in your book. I can't say everything, 'cause I'll get in trouble (from the Big 12 Conference for criticizing officiating), but we learned some stuff from those two field goals."

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Drescher has handled every snap for placements and punts for four years.

"I'm 150 percent prepared if we get in that situation again," he said. "I know exactly what's going on, exactly what to do, how to handle it."

Cyclones' home finale.

Saturday will be "Senior Day" at Iowa State, marking the final home game of the season. The Cyclones have 10 senior starters, including tight end Derrick Catlett, a former Fort Collins High athlete. Catlett has 23 catches for 253 yards and two touchdowns this season.

ISU completes its season Nov. 21 at Missouri. The Cyclones, who won 9-7 at Nebraska on Oct. 24, need one victory to become bowl eligible.

Footnotes.

Tuesday was Hawkins' birthday: No. 49. The staff helped him celebrate with cake. . . . Sophomore Jason Espinoza will be back to work this week at wide receiver and punt returner, Hawkins said. Pins were removed from the right thumb that Espinoza fractured during a practice before the West Virginia game. A subsequent infection in the thumb has subsided. . . . Redshirt freshman linebacker Doug Rippey (knee, hamstring) also hopes to be cleared for practice this week. He has missed four games.

Tom Kensler, The Denver Post

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