

Buff Darrell Scott leaving CU football team

Running back plans to transfer to UCLA

Camera staff
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 11/03/2009 04:20:37 PM MST



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Darrell Scott joined the Colorado football program on national television 21 months ago. He left it Tuesday via a text message to coaches.

"I'm out," was his reply to a text message coach Dan Hawkins sent him in mid-afternoon after Scott was seen at the Dal Ward Center making several trips through the front doors carrying some of his belongings.

Internet rumors of a transfer to Southern Cal had tipped off coaches and fans Tuesday morning but coaches were unable to get in touch with Scott until Hawkins became involved.

Scott said he had planned to talk to coaches face to face about his decision today, but he received a text from Hawkins asking him if he was "in or out" of the program. It's not clear if he still plans to meet with coaches today.

Scott later confirmed he is leaving to join his uncle and former CU wide receiver, Josh Smith, with the Bruins. Smith transferred from CU last spring.



UCLA is becoming something of a wayward home for former Buffs.

Former CU head coach Rick Neuheisel holds the same job with the Bruins and former CU offensive lineman Kai Maiava is a starting offensive lineman with the program this year.

Scott will have to sit out one year under NCAA transfer rules and will have two years of eligibility remaining as a fourth-year junior in 2011.

Scott's decision does not come at a good time for Hawkins and his assistants.

They are under assault from an angry fan base over the team's performance this season and a 2-6 record. The toll it is taking on Hawkins was evident when he met with reporters and television cameras briefly after Tuesday's practice.

When asked if he was surprised by Scott's decision, Hawkins said, "I was, but I don't really have a comment about it."

He was asked several follow up questions and answered each the same way.

"I don't really have a comment about it."

Athletic director Mike Bohn said he was disappointed to hear the news. He is scheduled to meet with Scott today to hear the player's explanation as to why he wants to leave CU.

When Smith initially decided to transfer last spring, Bohn gave Smith a release from his scholarship, but only to Southern California initially. Bohn later expanded the list of schools where Smith could transfer. Bohn said it was premature Tuesday to say if there would be any limits on Scott's release.

Running backs coach Darian Hagan said Scott's decision caught him by surprise. But Hagan admitted he had talked with Scott on several occasions in recent months about previous rumors of a transfer.

"I didn't find out the way I thought I deserved to find out," Hagan said. "It's unfortunate he decided he had to leave. He has to do what he has to do, but I just wish he did it in a different way."

Scott has said that his relationship with Hagan and the fact that his uncle was a Buff were the two biggest reasons he decided to join the CU program. After making his decision to end the recruiting process, Scott said Hagan was like a father figure in his life.

"I had no idea he was even thinking about it," Hagan said. "I've asked him on different occasions, 'Was he OK? Was he thinking about transferring?' Because I heard people saying stuff. I told him to be a man about it and look me in the eye. He said, 'No, coach. I never thought about it.'"

Scott was the nation's top running back recruit in the 2008 recruiting class out of St. Bonaventure High School in Ventura, Calif. He chose Colorado over Texas on national signing day during a live television broadcast in which he donned a CU baseball cap and left the Longhorns cap on the table.

Earlier this season, following the Buffs' loss to Texas in Austin, Scott was the last CU player off the field. He mingled with members of the Texas team for several minutes while it celebrated after his teammates left the field.

It is the second time in the past decade Colorado has successfully recruited the nation's top running back only to see that player fight injuries during his time in the program and ultimately transfer. Marcus Houston came to Boulder in 2000 and ultimately finished his career at Colorado State.

Scott had even less success than Houston enjoyed. Scott played in 11 games as a true freshman last fall, rushing 87 times for 343 yards. He scored one touchdown in the 2008 season opener against CSU.

He played second fiddle to Rodney Stewart, a much-less heralded member of the 2008 recruiting class, throughout his time in Boulder. Stewart once again quickly earned the bulk of the playing time this season. Scott had 23 carries for 96 yards and no scores.

Stewart said he and other teammates had heard rumors Scott was considering leaving the team and they had asked him about the rumors on multiple occasions.

"We've been asking him questions and coach Hagan all season, and he's been denying it," Stewart said. "To finally hear that he really did transfer or wanted to transfer was a shocker."

Stewart said he liked Scott and got along well with him but didn't build a brotherly bond with him. He said Scott's departure won't really affect him.

"For me it really doesn't mean nothing," Stewart said. "We're driving on a long bus on a long road. He's just one of the guys who jumped off."

The bus don't stop moving."

Scott became an effective kickoff returner, inheriting one of the jobs his uncle left behind when he decided to transfer. Scott had returned 21 kickoffs for 564 yards this season, but he was injured on the opening kickoff of the second game of the season at Toledo and recently underwent arthroscopic knee surgery to clean up some debris in the joint. He was expected back for next week's game at Iowa



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Ex-Buff Klatt criticizes CU over sign

Former QB upset over loss of piece of tradition

By Kyle Ringo Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 11/04/2009 12:10:39 AM MST

Former Colorado quarterback Joel Klatt has criticized athletic department leadership and coach Dan Hawkins recently for painting over a sign on the wall in the auditorium in the Dal Ward Center that was meaningful to players during Klatt's time in the program and to previous Buffs.

The sign read "The pride and tradition of the Colorado Buffaloes will not be entrusted to the timid or the weak."

It first appeared in the CU team room during former coach Bill McCartney's tenure and was in front of players in the program virtually every day throughout much of the past two decades according to Klatt, who is the co-host of a sports talk radio program in Denver weekday afternoons on 1510 AM.

"It was one of the those signs that you sat in the team room and you realized that for years and years before you, Buffaloes sat in the same seats you were in and they looked at that sign and they worked hard and you knew that they understood what you were going through," Klatt said.

"So it brought a real family mentality to being a Colorado Buffalo. You felt like you were a part of something bigger than yourself and even bigger than your team or class."

Klatt said the fact the sign was painted over concerns him and other former Buffs because it is an indication in their eyes that Hawkins and athletic director Mike Bohn don't value some of the traditions in place before their arrival.

Hawkins was asked about the sign on Tuesday and he said it was taken down to make room for a larger video viewing area.

Players and coaches now use the space where the sign used to be to review and study film, which is projected on the entire wall, making it easier to see for large groups.

However, Hawkins confused the sign with another smaller plaque with a similar saying that was also taken down and moved near the equipment room. The sign Klatt has referred to was painted on the wall before and was painted over when the new video system was installed.

"In a lot of people's eyes, including mine, that's completely unacceptable," Klatt said. "That sign was put up by coach McCartney and spanned generations and teams from a three-win team in 2000 to 2001 Big 12 champions to 1994 finishing third in the country, to national championships, to Heisman Trophies, to Big 12 North Championships.

"One of the common threads was we felt like we were part of a family, and it is disheartening to know that that is not being preached and to know that sign is no longer there for the players to look at."

Kasa disappointed

Freshman defensive end Nick Kasa spoke at length Tuesday about his season coming to an end because of a case of mononucleosis and an enlarged spleen.

He said he hopes the NCAA will award him a medical redshirt season because he played in only four game and a total of 47 snaps.

He missed the second half of fall camp and the first three games of his first season of college ball because of a sprained ligament in his knee.

"It's really frustrating definitely," Kasa said. "I can't catch a break. But if I get the season back, that would be even be better because I get some playing time and I still get my four years to play."

Slow start remedy

Hawkins said he and his coaches "have a few things up our sleeves" for fixing the Buffs tendency for slow starts this season. He did not say what those things are and players asked about them Tuesday did not know what might be in store for them.

CU has been outscored 64-27 in the first quarter this season and hasn't scored more than once in the first quarter of any game.

Hawkins said some of the emotion prior to games has to come from the coaching staff.

"I've stood at the pulpit several times this year and been pretty demonstrative," Hawkins said. "You can't do that all the time because sometimes that wears out. I don't think you have to be a yeller, screamer. I don't think you have to be that. I just think there has to be something inside you for whatever reason that compels you to bring your 'A' game. For every team or for every player, that can be different."

Notable

Longtime linebackers coach Brian Cabral will participate in his 300th football game as a member of the Colorado program this weekend. He played in 46 games as a linebacker in the mid-1970s and has coached at CU since 1989. ...

Hawkins said surgery was initially scheduled for wide receiver Anthony Wright this week, but it was postponed. Wright injured his knee against Missouri and is out of this week's game. ...

CU officials said about 8,500 tickets remain for the Texas A&M game.

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sports

CU tailback Scott plans switch to UCLA

CU loses a sophomore who was ranked as the nation's top high school back when he signed.

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

Posted: 11/04/2009 01:00:00 AM MST



Heavily recruited tailback Darrell Scott, playing against CSU this season, made only four starts in his two seasons at CU. (John Leyba | The Denver Post)

Extras

[View](#) slide show of CU running back Darrell Scott.

BOULDER — Tailback Darrell Scott created so much fanfare by signing a national letter of intent with Colorado in February 2008, it's a wonder Boulder didn't throw a ticker-tape parade along the Pearl Street Mall. Tuesday, Scott left the program and said he hopes to join his uncle, former CU wide receiver Josh Smith, at UCLA.

Scott, 6-feet-1 and 215 pounds, was rated as the nation's No. 1 prep running back prospect after rushing for 2,433 yards and 33 touchdowns in 2007 as a senior at St. Bonaventure High School in Ventura, Calif. He picked CU over Texas after a heated recruiting battle that drew national attention.

"There's not much to say other than, 'Sorry to Buff Nation,' " Scott said Tuesday by phone. "I've been thinking about it for a couple of months."

When asked his reasons for transferring, Scott would say only, "I just want to go home."

CU players were surprised by his decision. So was running backs coach Darian Hagan, who spent countless hours recruiting Scott. Hagan said he received the news via a text message from Scott at about 1:30 p.m.

"I didn't find out the way I thought I deserved to

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find out," Hagan said. "It's unfortunate that he decided to leave. He has to do what he has to do. But I just wish he would have done it a different way."

Scott said he will ask CU for a release to UCLA.

"Those are my plans, to join Josh," Scott said.

Smith played two seasons at CU before transferring to UCLA this summer. When reached Tuesday by phone, Smith told The Denver Post that Scott "was really vague" when he called Smith with the news. "He said, like, 'I've had enough of this (expletive). I'm outta here, bro.'"

Smith said Scott "wasn't too much bothered" by his lack of playing time. "He was just going through the motions," Smith said.

CU coach Dan Hawkins was unaware of Scott's decision until after his weekly news conference Tuesday. After practice, Hawkins told reporters he would not address questions regarding Scott.

Hagan, who became close with Scott's family, said Tuesday he "had no idea" Scott was even contemplating a transfer.

"I asked him on different occasions, was he OK, was he thinking about transferring, with people saying stuff?" Hagan said. "I told him to be a man about it and look me in the eye. He said, 'Aw, no, coach. I never thought about it.'"

"Today was a total surprise for me," Hagan added. "Life goes on. When I wake up tomorrow,

it will be a different day."

Hawkins addressed the team prior to practice and announced Scott's departure, but wide receiver Scotty McKnight said he had heard before the team meeting.

"When I went into the training room, I guess his locker was cleaned out," Mc-Knight said. "Guys are bummed. Darrell was well-liked on the team. He's a cool guy. There's not a bad bone in Darrell's body. I was pretty caught off-guard by the whole thing."

Sophomore tailback Rodney Stewart, who has become CU's featured back, said he was shocked.

"We were close in practice," Stewart said. "Off the field, we had a little bit of a relationship. He just stayed to himself (after Smith left)."

Added sophomore quarterback Tyler Hansen: "I'm disappointed because he could have been a great player and a strength for the Buffs. It's too bad it didn't work out."

Scott was voted preseason newcomer of the year in a poll of Big 12 coaches prior to the 2008 season. But plagued by ankle and knee injuries, and losing playing time to Stewart, Scott started a total of only four games in two seasons. Hagan often cited injuries, Scott's problems with blocking in pass protection and Stewart's production as explanations for Scott's lack of playing time.

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Scott rushed for 95 yards on 23 carries this season. His best game this season came Sept. 11 against Toledo, when he netted 85 yards on 12 carries. However, he banged up a knee in that game and had arthroscopic surgery Oct. 22 and had not played since.

Hagan said he plans to recruit at least two tailbacks "that want to be here, and know there will be ups and downs and you just have to fight through them."

Staff writers John Henderson and Natalie Meisler contributed to this report. Tom Kensler: 303-954-1280 or tkensler@denverpost.com

Prep stars lose their shine

A look at Colorado football coach Dan Hawkins' recruits who were ranked as a top-100 prospect nationally:

2007 RECRUITING CLASS

Ryan Miller, offensive lineman, Columbine High School: Has been a CU starter since earning starting job in seventh game against Kansas State as a true freshman in 2007. Granted medical redshirt to recover year of eligibility after suffering fractured fibula against Florida State in 2008.

2008 RECRUITING CLASS

Lynn Katoa, linebacker, Cottonwood HS, Salt Lake City: Enrolled at CU early but was suspended by the school as a freshman for

participating in an off-campus altercation not long after national signing day in February 2008. Katoa never played at CU, leaving the program last spring.

Jon Major, linebacker, Ponderosa HS: Redshirted in 2008 after suffering a torn ACL during an August drill. The injury required surgery. Listed third on the depth chart this season. Has played in two games, against Toledo and Wyoming.

Darrell Scott, tailback, St. Bonaventure HS, Ventura, Calif.: Plagued by injuries and lost playing time with the emergence of Rodney Stewart, Scott started one game as a freshman (Iowa State) and three this season (CSU, Toledo, Kansas) before undergoing arthroscopic knee surgery Oct. 22. Left the program Tuesday.

2009 RECRUITING CLASS

Nick Kasa, defensive end, Legacy HS: Suffered a torn MCL in his left knee during August drills and missed the Buffs' first three games. Played in four games, registering two tackles (including one for a loss, against Texas), but missed the Missouri game last week because of mononucleosis and an enlarged spleen. Will not play again this year and will apply to the NCAA for an injury hardship to recover the year of eligibility. *Tom Kensler, The Denver Post*

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college football

Hawkins says CU must cut loose against Texas A&M

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

Posted: 11/03/2009 01:29:43 PM MST

Updated: 11/03/2009 01:47:31 PM MST



Colorado head coach Dan Hawkins. (RJ Sangosti | The Denver Post)

BOULDER — Speaking today during his weekly media luncheon, Colorado coach Dan Hawkins said he is looking for his team to come out in a "cut it loose" mode Saturday at home against Texas A&M.

Colorado (2-6, 1-3 Big 12), on a two-game

losing streak after an upset of then-No. 17 Kansas, must win its last four games to become bowl eligible.

On the other hand, Texas A&M (5-3, 2-2) is going in a positive direction. The Aggies come off two conference victories, at Texas Tech (52-30) and at home against Iowa State (35-10).

Hawkins said at times his team has been in a cut-it-loose mode.

"(Against) Kansas, they were great that way," Hawkins said. "Against Texas, they were very much that way. The Kansas State

Colorado Football

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- Oct. 31 .

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- [Visit](#) Tom Kensler's All Things Buffs blog for a behind-the-scenes look at CU sports .

game — they were probably a more reserved, a little more reserved, for whatever reasons.

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Maybe at the start of (the Missouri game), a little bit more reserved.

"We're trying to get guys over the edge of ... I always tell them to, 'Play to win and not to lose. Don't play not to make a mistake. You've gotta go.'

"There's been flashes of that, signs of that. In the last two games, early on, you didn't see that."

The Buffs have lost any momentum gained from the upset win over Kansas on Oct. 17. In the past two games, they have been outscored by a combined 56-23 in losses to Kansas State and Missouri.

"Some teams are really going to feed off the Kansas win, take that all in, think about how much better you can be, what you're capable of, thrive on that moving forward," Hawkins said.

"I think probably in that case (in a 20-6 loss the following week at Kansas State), what (Colorado players) discounted a little bit is, you've got to bring that much more juice," the coach added. "I think anytime you win, you jump up on the radar.

"If you beat Kansas, and you're playing Kansas State, (the Wildcats) are not just playing you; they're also playing Kansas. There's becomes a whole 'nother level of intensity that you have to bring to it."

Hawkins was asked if getting the team pumped up is the job of the coaching staff.

"It does come from us," Hawkins said. "I've stood at the pulpit several times this year and have been pretty demonstrative. You can't do that all the time. That wears out. I don't think (a player) has to be a yell-screamer. There just has to be something inside you, for whatever reason, that tells you to bring your A-game."

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woody paige

Paige: Scott free, and for CU it's costly

By Woody Paige
The Denver Post

Posted: 11/04/2009 01:00:00 AM MST

When Darrell Scott picked his future college football team on Feb. 6, 2008, the No. 1 prep running back recruit in the country said the primary reason for his choice was: "Hopefully, we'll pull in a national championship."

He should have picked the Longhorns then. Texas was Scott's other finalist, and the semifinalists were Florida and LSU.

"Great" Scott might have played on a national championship team this season. The 'Horns or the Gators could win the BCS title, and the Bayou Bengals aren't bad.

In fact, 39 of the 40 major schools that offered Scott a scholarship probably have a better shot at a national championship than the one he finally picked.

Just when Colorado coach Dan Hawkins thought it couldn't get any worse in Boulder, . . . it just got worse.

Scott has produced his longest college run. He has rushed from Colorado back to his home state, California. And the Buffs helped run him off.

"I've been thinking about it," Scott told The Post's Tom Kensler, "for a couple of months."

Hawkins hasn't been able to recruit a quality quarterback as long as his son plays at CU. Now, Hawkins won't be able to recruit a high-profile running back because: (a) The kid won't believe he will play tailback here, and (b) He won't believe he will be playing for any championship at CU.

Just as frankly, maybe Scott wasn't that ultra-special. He (a) reported out of shape as a freshman; (b) was beaten out by a 5-foot-6, 175-pound fellow freshman last season and this year; (c) was slowed by injuries for much of his season and a half at Colorado; (d) wasn't given much chance to display his talent, even when healthy; (e) ended up as a part-time kickoff returner; and (f) played on two lousy teams with offensive line and QB issues.

We won't know how great or good Scott actually is until he joins UCLA, which is where he intends to play next. Scott followed his uncle, receiver Josh Smith, to Colorado. Again, he follows Smith, who transferred to UCLA, where, yes, "Tricky" Ricky's Revenge continues.

CU gets CUriouser and CUriouser.

Hawkins seemed unaware during his media

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luncheon Tuesday that Scott was leaving. The news broke shortly afterward. But he might have asked around. Everybody else assumed Scott was getting out soon, that he had had enough.

The No. 1 prep recruit in the country on the national signing date last year, Terrelle Pryor, is the starting quarterback for Ohio State. Scott, meanwhile, was an also-ran running back. Everyone was always asking, "When is Scott going to play?" and Hawkins was always replying, "I told Darrell I would get a lot of questions about why he isn't playing." Wonder why? Hawkins trumpeted the signing of Scott as if he were, as some scouts claimed, the league's second arrival of Adrian Peterson.

Hawkins eventually said Tuesday afternoon that Scott is departing for "assorted personal reasons." Hawkins didn't mention that one reason is the CU coach, who is busy putting out more fires than Red Adair. Hawk won't have to answer those irritating questions about when Scott will play anymore, and the chancellor and the athletic director won't have to issue votes of confidence before Saturday's game.

The 6-foot-1, 220-pound Scott rushed for 5,600 yards and 79 touchdowns while winning two state championships. But he did switch high schools before his senior year, possibly because his services were shopped around.

Maybe he wouldn't have become a starter or a factor for the Longhorns, who possess four different running backs with 38-49 carries this season. But he would be at the Big 12

Conference championship game and, likely, the national championship game. And maybe in the recent CU-Texas game in Austin, he would have gotten more than three rushes and one pass reception.

Scott never *thought this* when he was deciding between Texas and Colorado.

CU owed Scott more than an excellent education. He had committed to Hawkins and given the program a significant recruiting lift when it was needed. He deserved more of an opportunity to play when he was healthy, just as Marcus Houston deserved more when he was healthy. And Houston, the last "great" running back recruited by Colorado, had to run away. Who's next?

In his first practice before last season, Scott looked impressive, elusive and fast. One senior defensive lineman predicted he would win the Heisman Trophy in two years. Others predicted immediate stardom.

Nobody at CU is predicting trophies or stardom for Scott anymore, and Scott is not predicting a national championship for the Buffaloes.

As the knight told Indiana Jones after the bad guy grabbed the wrong goblet and his head exploded: "He chose poorly."

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Top recruit will leave CU

By [Kyle Clark](#) on November 3, 2009 · [Comment](#) ·  [Email This](#) · [ShareThis](#)



Colorado's football program took a hit Tuesday when top recruit Darrell Scott announced he would transfer. (Daily Camera photo)

Tuesday's news conference with Colorado coach Dan Hawkins had an eerie feel to it. Something was amiss, but it was hard to place your finger on exactly what that was. Reporters left the Dal Ward athletic center about 30 minutes early, as the university declined to provide a star player for questions, something it has done every week prior.

At first, it seemed simply to be a product of the state of the program. The Buffs are 2-6 and still spiraling after Saturday's blowout loss to Missouri. Players gave impassioned statements right after the game, so it made sense that it would be hard to find someone eager to face the media and talk about how poor his team has been playing.

Hawkins didn't have much to say, compared with his 25-minute opening speech last week. Business was attended to: DE Nick Kasa is out for the year and will apply for a hardship red shirt after contracting mono and an enlarged spleen; linebackers coach Brian Cabral will be on the sidelines for his 300th game Saturday; Hawkins thinks Texas A&M is a good team; and emotion needs to translate to the field. OK, great.

Afterward, it was hard to think of CU football in any other terms than “blase.” Apathy morphed into despair around 3 p.m., however, when officials confirmed a bombshell: Top recruit Darrell Scott is leaving the Buffaloes. Scott told his coaches Tuesday afternoon he plans to return to his home in Southern California. No announcements have been made regarding what school Scott plans to play for, but the writing on the wall says UCLA is the likely candidate. His uncle Josh Smith, last year’s leading receiver for CU, left last summer to play for coach Rick Neuheisel and the Bruins. Neuheisel is a former head coach at Colorado.

The question on everyone’s mind is “Why?” Sadly, it’s easy to build a big list of reasons. While the official word from the administration is “various personal reasons” (can you get any more thinly veiled than that?), here are some real possibilities:

- After an injury-filled 2008 campaign, Scott was ready to be the guy on offense coming into this year. Scott has barely played in five games and has carried the ball only 23 times.
- Coaches said the limited carries on offense were due to a bruised knee Scott sustained on the opening kickoff in the game against Toledo . . . yet Scott ran for 85 yards afterward.
- Meanwhile, Scott was used heavily in the early part of this season for kickoff returns during games he was “too hurt” to run the ball. Aren’t kickoff returns much more dangerous, much more physical?
- With another arthroscopic surgery two weeks before Tuesday’s announcement, it’s possible Scott grew tired of a team not talented enough to protect him.
- Rumors around the school indicated there were issues with the relationship between Smith and the coaches before the start of this year, which might have prompted him to transfer. It seems like Scott tried to stick it out, but his uncle might have had his ear.
- On the flip side, some have hinted that Scott wasn’t willing to put in the work demanded of him, and was criticized highly for showing up his freshman year out of shape.

Scott was Hawkins’ marquee recruit since taking over. He was considered the top running back coming out of high school in 2007. Now this will be Hawkins’ biggest blemish. He’s the guy who chased off Darrell Scott, regardless of whether that statement is fair.

And according to some of the coaching staff, it may not be fair. Hawkins wasn’t aware of the news until after his press conference. According to CU, Scott’s locker was cleaned out before anyone could do anything about it, sometime around 1pm.

Running backs coach Darian Hagan found out from Scott about the departure via text message, and Scott would not answer Hagan’s calls back. The coach was livid at tonight’s practice -

“I don’t even want to know the reason. Because there’s not a reason. He’ll probably say, ‘Well, I had to get home to my mom, or I just wasn’t happy here,’ he’ll make up a whole bunch of different things, and the truth of the matter is...I don’t know. He just did something he shouldn’t have done.”

While this story dominates the chatter regarding the state of a declining program, the job security of Dan Hawkins and even calls for AD Mike Bohn’s head, there is still a game to be played on Saturday. Texas A&M comes to Boulder with a 5-3 record, 2-2 in the Big 12. If you thought Missouri’s offense looked good, wait until you see the scoring machine the Aggies can be.

Three keys to the game -

JERROD, MEET HERROD

A&M's junior quarterback, Jerrod Johnson, is a big boy that can hurt you in many ways.

"It's not often that you find guys that are as tall as he is and as heavy as he is and can run like he does," said Hawkins, "He's got a tremendous arm, he can make all the wide-field throws you want. He's the total package and that's where he can hurt you. He can not only scramble but put his foot in the ground and throw it a long ways down the field."

Johnson is six-foot-five and weighs over 240 lbs. The quarterback has thrown for over 2,500 yards and is in the top ten for total offense nationally. Johnson had some struggles earlier in the season, a result of some offensive line issues the Aggies were having. If Colorado wants to slow down A&M's no-huddle attack, it starts with getting to the backfield. Defensive linemen such as Marquez Herrod will need to get familiar with Johnson, and put him on his back.

STAND BY YOUR MAN

"It bothers me, I know it bothers the rest of our O line," said offensive tackle Nate Solder of the Missouri game that allowed eight sacks, three fumbles and a safety. "We take that responsibility even though it may not have been all us. We have to do the best that we can do and when we see eight sacks that's not good on us or our offense at all."

Colorado has had one shutout this year, and they shouldn't expect another. To win Saturday, they need to be putting points up on the board consistently. Tyler Hansen needs more time in the pocket to react, and when he does scramble, shouldn't have to worry about his blindside the second he rotates out.

Asked if a running quarterback made blocking different or more difficult, Solder laid out the formula. "You gotta stay on your guy, you've got to keep blocking him well into the play, that changes it a lot. It's exciting though."

FRIENDLY FIRE

Technically a home game, Folsom Field doesn't sound too appealing right now. Last week just 45,634 fans showed up, one of the smallest home crowds in almost two years. People are starting to vote with their wallets, and if they already have tickets they'll come vote with their voices.

The mood is going to shift from chants and signs to a full-on protest. Right now student groups are trying to organize a "blue-out" for those still coming to the game. Boulder students are organized, they brought back the fabled "Mall Crawl" last weekend on Pearl Street. Despite pleas from university officials and the police to stay away, over 4,000 people showed up, all started by a page on Facebook.

[The current page](#) invites fans to wear their Denver Nuggets or other powder-blue apparel to the game, to voice their discontent with the program. In the 1980's, when Colorado was at their worst, the Buffaloes wore uniforms of the same color. Some may not agree with this tactic, calling it disloyal, but it should be commended. In this world, you have to use all the voice you can muster, even if it's the quietest one in the room. Those who want to promote change in a situation they have no control over are doing the best they can, and this is so much better than some of the other, ahem, hijinks the student body could think of.

Editor's note: Comments have been turned off on football stories involving CU to meet the university's requirement for giving media credentials to Web site reporters and photographers.

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Longmont, Colorado
Monday, November 16,
2009

Publish Date: 11/4/2009

CU: Scott-free: Tailback's exit leaves football program reeling

Player's text to coach: 'I'm out'

By Patrick Ridgell

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BOULDER — Darian Hagan didn't see it coming.

The Colorado running backs coach said he learned of the big news Tuesday — Darrell Scott's plan to transfer — in a text message he received from Scott around 1 p.m. Hagan said he tried calling Scott after receiving the message, but said Scott did not pick up the phone.

Other Buffs responded in different ways. Some were mad, others numb, others did not want to acknowledge more bad news coming from a 2-6 program that has fans threatening boycotts and protests. While Hagan conducted interviews, several Buffs walked by the scrum telling reporters to "get over it."

But Hagan, the man who recruited Scott from Ventura, Calif., to Boulder when every other program in the nation craved his signature, could not mask his anger. This might take him awhile to get over.

"I don't even want to know a reason," Hagan said. "There's not a reason. He'll probably say, 'I want to get home to my mom' or 'I wasn't happy here.' He'll make up a whole bunch of different things.

"But the truth of the matter is, this is something he shouldn't have done."

Hagan wasn't the only one blindsided. Head coach Dan Hawkins received a two-word text from Scott at around 1:45 p.m. It simply said, "I'm out." Scott cleaned out his locker before many teammates knew what was happening.

Tuesday night, before a large bank of television cameras and several reporters, Hawkins refused to comment on Scott's decision. All Hawkins would say is that he told the team of the news before practice. Tuesday evening, one influential former Buff, 1990 Butkus Award-winner Alfred Williams, called for Hawkins' dismissal on his radio show.

In recent weeks, Scott has clearly not wanted to do interviews — yet still granted them. Reached via cell phone on Tuesday afternoon, Scott still wasn't very talkative.

He said he plans to finish the semester at CU. He said it was "best not to" elaborate on anything, including his lack of playing time and his battle with injuries while at CU. He added, "I just want to say I'm sorry to Buff nation. That's it." Asked if he plans to transfer to a school closer to home, Scott said, "I just want to go back home." In a release, CU reported Scott is leaving for "assorted personal reasons."

Scott is expected to transfer to UCLA, where his uncle, former CU receiver Josh Smith, transferred following the 2008-09 academic year. Smith said on signing day, 2008, that it was unlikely Scott would have signed with CU were it not for Smith's presence in Boulder.

Scott was rated the nation's best prep running back. He chose CU over Texas and announced his choice on national television.



Colorado's Darrell Scott tries to avoid a tackle during the Buffs' game against Kansas on Oct. 17. Scott texted his coaches Tuesday with the unexpected announcement that he is leaving the team. Scott is expected to transfer to UCLA.

Lewis Geyer/Times-Call file

He was named the Big 12's preseason newcomer of the year in the summer of 2008. Former CU defensive lineman George Hypolite said that summer that Scott would one day win a Heisman Trophy at CU if the program's veterans showed him the proper way to conduct himself.

Injuries have slowed Scott during his season-and-a-half in college. He arrived in Boulder in August 2008, out of shape after spending the summer in California completing an Algebra II course he needed in order to enroll at CU. He suffered various injuries, including a sprained ankle, through which he unsuccessfully tried to play.

Hagan said in August 2009 that he expected Scott to better handle the bumps and nagging injuries running backs sustain in the Big 12. And another injury would shortly come. Scott suffered a knee injury returning the opening kickoff Sept. 11 at Toledo. He stayed in the game to rush for 85 yards before CU's large deficit forced it to scrap the run game.

Scott had arthroscopic knee surgery on Oct. 22. CU said last week it hoped Scott would be able to play Nov. 14 at Iowa State.

Attrition continues to hound Hawkins' program. Scott is the second player to quit this fall. Lagrone Shields quit after he won a starting defensive end job in August camp and later lost it.

Scott's departure makes it five players from CU's 21-member 2008 class, ranked a top-20 squad by recruiting analysts, who are no longer in the program. Scott was its highest-rated player — and the nation's highest-rated running back.

The New York times closely chronicled his recruitment. One of its reporters even received access to Scott's home the night before signing day and detailed Texas' final pitch to sign Scott. The tailback chose CU. The next day, he revealed his intention by putting a Buffs hat on his head before ESPN cameras.

"Over the last couple of years, we've had a lot of that kind of stuff," senior linebacker Marcus Burton said. "You know, different guys are looking for different things. When times are hard, it's hard when you're young to stick it out. When times are good, then you see the opposite of that."

Times were never too good for Scott at CU. Two-star recruit Rodney Stewart, another member of the 2008 class, beat him out for the starting tailback spot. While Scott averaged 26.9 yards per kickoff return, he had 95 yards on 23 carries in 2009. He played in 11 games as a freshman in 2008, totaling 343 rushing yards.

Hagan's main frustration, he said, stems from the time he devoted to Scott. Hagan said he heard people speculate about Scott's future, and asked him if he was considering a move. According to Hagan, he asked Scott in recent weeks to be a man and look him in the eye.

"He said, 'nah, coach, I never thought about it,'" Hagan said.

Apparently, he had.

"I just think I deserved a little bit better way of letting me know he wasn't happy here," Hagan said.

Read Patrick Ridgell's [CU sports blog](#). He can be reached at pridgell@times-call.com.

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Longmont, Colorado
Monday, November 16,
2009

Publish Date: 11/4/2009

Teammates 'bummed' by departure

By Patrick Ridgell

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BOULDER — Reaction from the Colorado Buffaloes to Tuesday's news about their teammate's plan to transfer was mixed. But at least one Buff said he'll harbor no bad feelings toward tailback Darrell Scott.

"I wish Darrell the best," receiver Scotty McKnight said. "He's a great athlete and a good player. I hope, wherever he goes, he's successful."

Scott announced his decision to leave the team Saturday in text messages to running backs coach Darian Hagan and head coach Dan Hawkins. Scott said he wants to return to his home in southern California. He is expected to transfer to UCLA, to which his uncle, former CU receiver Josh Smith, transferred last spring.

Many Buffs learned of the news in a meeting prior to Tuesday's practice. Scott had cleaned out his locker prior to when many of his teammates arrived for practice.

McKnight had not talked to him as of Tuesday evening.

"Guys are bummed," McKnight said. "Darrell was well-liked on the team. I'm close with Darrell. I was close with Josh. That was hard when he left, too."

"I was pretty caught off-guard by the whole thing. That's how it is. When guys aren't happy, they leave. That's life. Hopefully it works out for him."

In recent weeks, Scott has sometimes stood by himself at practice with his arms crossed. McKnight said Scott was always kind of a quiet guy but well-liked by teammates.

"Darrell was a cool guy," McKnight said. "Everybody got along with him. There's wasn't a bad bone in his body. You've got to like him."

"I don't know if he closed up (after Smith left). It probably hurt him. It was his uncle. You never want to see that happen, when the family leaves."

McKnight said he plans to speak with Scott again, but not too soon. He said he still maintains relationships with other Buffs who've quit, including former quarterback Brian White, who left in 2006 after Bernard Jackson beat him out for the starting spot.

Tailback Rodney Stewart said he thought Scott would have transferred at the end of the season no matter what kind of year he had. But Tuesday's news was still a surprise.

"Coach Hagan has been asking that question all season," Stewart said. "To finally hear that he did want to transfer, that was a shocker."

Asked why Stewart enjoyed so much more success at CU than Scott did, Stewart said, "It could be a lot of things — practice, weightlifting, I don't know." Stewart said he did not feel close to Scott but added that Scott was pretty open when they hung out together.

McKnight said he did not know why Scott did not reach his potential in Boulder but cited Scott's injuries as one possible reason.

"Hopefully, everything works out for him and he stays healthy and he has a great career, wherever he goes," McKnight said. "That guy could be a big-time NFL back if he can stay healthy."

The Buffs also hope everything works out for them, too.

"We're driving on a long bus (ride) on a long road," Stewart said. "He's just one of the guys who's jumped off the bus. The bus isn't going to stop moving — it's got to keep going."

SIGN OF THE TIMES: "The pride and the tradition of the Colorado Buffaloes will not be entrusted to the timid or the weak" has returned to the Dal Ward Center, according to Hawkins.

The program had painted over the longstanding phrase when the wall on which it was written was changed so the wall could be used as a video board, Hawkins said.

He said the phrase has been placed on a sign and hung on a wall near the equipment room.

The removal of the original phrase had become a sore point for former players and fans.

EXTRA POINTS: Bob Simmons, a former CU assistant and Oklahoma State head coach, attended Tuesday's practice. Simmons said he's going to be working as a mentor for some of the current Buffs. ... Hawkins said the fake field goal Missouri ran Saturday was not a surprise and that the coaches expected it to be a shovel pass. "We just have to do a better job," Hawkins said. ... Tuesday's injury report listed safety Ben Burney as probable with a shoulder bruise. Receiver Anthony Wright (knee) is out. Hawkins said work scheduled Thursday for Wright's knee has been postponed. Linebacker Bryan Stengel (concussion) is day-to-day.

Read Patrick Ridgell's [CU sports blog](#). He can be reached at pridgell@times-call.com.

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Darrell Scott leaves CU

Sophomore running back quits via text message

By Cheng Sio on November 4, 2009

Darrell Scott shocked many when he decided to leave the Colorado Buffaloes football program via text message, said Darian Hagan, CU running backs coach and the man who recruited Scott.

"I found out at probably around 1:30 [p.m.] and then I didn't find out the way I thought I deserve to find out," Hagan said. "Just the time that I devoted to him, I just think I deserve a little better way of letting me know that he wasn't happy here."

Head coach Dan Hawkins said in a news release Tuesday afternoon that the 20-year-old Scott is leaving for assorted personal reasons and assumed he would be transferring closer to his Ventura, Calif. home. After practice, Hawkins was quiet about the situation.

"I just don't really have a comment about it," Hawkins glumly said. "I mean I really don't."

The 6-feet, 1-inch, 220-pound Scott could not be reached for comment Tuesday night but he did tell multiple news sources he intends to rejoin his uncle Josh Smith at UCLA. Smith transferred from CU during the summer because he wanted to go to a school that will enable him to pursue a music career.

While the coaches found out about Scott's departure through technology, some players discovered the bad news when they saw Scott's locker.

Sophomore quarterback Tyler Hansen said he heard about the news around 2 p.m.

"I walked into the locker room and then [Jason] Espinoza said, 'Hey, did you hear what happened?'" Hansen said. "I'm like, 'What happened?' He goes, 'Look over there.' Darrell's locker was totally empty—nothing in there."

According to the Denver Post, Scott said he had been thinking about transferring "for a couple of months." But according to players and coaches, they had no clue.

"I had no idea he was even thinking about it," Hagan said. "I've asked him on different occasions was he OK, was he thinking about transferring because I heard people saying stuff? I told him to be a man about it. He looked me in the eye, he said, 'Coach, I never thought about it.' Today was a total surprise for me."

Junior wide receiver Scotty McKnight said, "That was out of the blue."



Darrell Scott views the field during the Sept. 6 matchup against CSU. Scott announced Tuesday that he is leaving the CU football program. (CU Independent file/Danielle Alberti)

McKnight said he, Scott and Smith were close friends. McKnight described Scott as quiet, cool and a nice kid without a bad bone in his body. He didn't think Scott was the kind of person to rush into such a decision.

"If I know Darrell, he probably didn't just wake up in the morning and say, 'Hey, I'm going to quit,'" McKnight said. "He probably talked to some people about it and maybe he felt this is the best thing for him."

Scott was widely considered the nation's top running back prospect in the 2008 recruiting class as he earned All-American honors from Parade, USA Today, Prep Star and Superprep as well as other accolades. However, Scott has yet to live up to the billing in his less than two stellar years in Boulder.

Last year, he rushed for 343 yards and one touchdown in 11 games. This season, Scott has carried the ball 23 times for 95 yards, 85 of which came against Toledo. He's also CU's leader in all-purpose yards with 694, but 564 of which came from kickoff returns. He entered the season in a four-way battle for the starting running back job with sophomores Rodney "Speedy" Stewart and Brian Lockridge, and junior Demetrius Sumler.

One reason why Scott didn't shine was because of injuries. The sophomore running back had arthroscopic knee surgery on Oct. 22 to clean up some cartilage after injuring the knee against Toledo on Sept. 11. Not only has he been inactive since the operation, but he hasn't been around teammates much when he was rehabbing the injured knee.

"With him getting surgery a couple of weeks ago, he wasn't really around," Hansen said. "He was rehabbing, so we didn't really see him much. When I did see him, he was fine. He would talk to me; he didn't seem like anything would happen, so it came as a total surprise to me."

McKnight, however, still believes Scott has a couple of good years left and can possibly join an NFL roster someday.

"There's flashes, when he was healthy, that you could see," McKnight said. "There was a lot of talent there."

Despite the abrupt departure, many wish Scott the best with whatever path he chooses to take next.

"When I see him tomorrow or whenever, I'll say, 'Hey man, it was a pleasure playing with you. Hopefully, it works out,'" Hansen said.

"I wish Darrell nothing but the best," Hagan said. "He has to do what he has to do. Life goes on and when I wake up tomorrow, it will be a different day."

But before Scott can leave to pursue his football career at another school, he will have to coordinate the paperwork through CU's compliance office, which will also conduct an official exit interview.

One player feels he was going to exit either now, or later.

"I think if he didn't transfer now, then probably after the season," Stewart said. "No matter how a great season he would've had, he would've probably transferred."

Contact CU Independent Co-Sports Editor Cheng Sio at Cheng.sio@colorado.edu.

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