

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

sports

CU Buffs' offense finally showing some good signs

By Chris Dempsey
The Denver Post

Posted: 11/09/2009 01:00:00 AM MST

Colorado Football

- **Watch** video of Nebraska-Colorado football Nov. 27 .
- **View** slide show of Nebraska-Colorado football Nov. 27 .
- **Analyze** boxscore for Nebraska-Colorado football Nov. 27 .
- **View** slide show of CU cornerback Jimmy Smith .
- **View** slide show of CU coach Dan Hawkins with his son Cody, a quarterback for the Buffs .
- **View** slide show of Colorado-Iowa State football Nov. 14 .
- **View** slide show of Texas A&M-Colorado football Nov. 7 .
- **Visit** the CU Stats Page for boxscores, Big 12 standings, team leaders and more .
- **Visit** Tom Kensler's All Things Buffs blog for a behind-the-scenes look at CU sports .

BOULDER — One game does not make a season, in this case a 35-34 victory over Texas A&M, so Colorado offensive coordinator Eric Kiesau will not sit back and play the part of a satisfied football coach.

But he is encouraged by the direction the Colorado offense appears to be headed. How could he not be?

CU's 437 yards Saturday at Folsom Field against

Advertisement

TARGET WEB COUPON
EXPIRES 2/27/10

25¢ each

with purchase of twenty-five
4x6" Kodak instant prints



This coupon is intended for use by the original recipient only and is void if copied, scanned, transferred, purchased, sold or prohibited by law. Limit one offer per transaction. GiftCards and tax will not be included in determining purchase total. No cash value. Offer available at Target One Hour Photo Labs. Go to Target.com/photo for the location nearest you. One Hour service limited to machine capacity.




9856-0113-1882-4674-0306-4005-84

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

the Aggies were the Buffaloes' second-best total of the season — 451 at Toledo was tops — and their best in Big 12 play.

CU entered the game with the 113th-ranked offense in the nation at 286.1 yards per game, the 114th-ranked rushing offense (76.3 yards), the 96th-ranked scoring offense (21.8 points) and the 71st-ranked passing offense (209.9 yards).

In Big 12 play, those averages dropped to 217.2 total yards and 158.5 yards passing, both last in the conference. CU's 58.8 yards rushing per game ranked 11th. And the Buffs' 17.8 points per game ranked 10th.

Now the Buffs hope their offense has turned a corner. Their 166 yards rushing against the Aggies were a season high. And wide receiver Markques Simas' 135 yards in receptions were a single-game high for a CU player this season.

"We really just have to keep on getting better," Kiesau said. "Offensively we were doing OK, and we had a good game, but we can't start jumping off to Dal Ward and saying we're one of the top offenses in the country. We've got to continue to work on our run game and counter that with our pass game and just continue to get better. Because yes, (Saturday) was a very good game, and I'm fired up for our offense to do well, but we have to consistently do that every week. We can't just be a one-hit wonder."

Colorado's continued progress should run

parallel with the progress of sophomore quarterback Tyler Hansen. Hansen had his best overall game Saturday since being named the starter for the Kansas game Oct. 17, going 21-of-32 passing for 271 yards and a touchdown against the Aggies.

"Tyler did some really good things in the Kansas game, but this game he was just much more in control," CU coach Dan Hawkins said. "I thought our passing game kind of matured a little bit. We hit a deep shot to Markques and did some other things that way. So hopefully our offense will start feeling itself a little bit that way and build from that."

Said Hansen: "I feel more comfortable in this atmosphere. This is my fourth start this year, so I feel a lot more comfortable and I feel I can do some stuff."

And it shows.

"At all positions, when you have a young player, they're not just going to come out of the blocks and start rolling," Kiesau said. "We all want that, and I think that's the expectation. So he's had some really bright moments and some moments are like, 'Are you kidding me?' But you have to pinch yourself and say, 'He's a (sophomore); he's still learning.' And that's why I wanted to stay with him this week, after last week's game."

"I want him to learn and grow from his mistakes and see if he can get better and pull himself out of it. That was the refreshing thing (against

Advertisement

TARGET WEB COUPON
EXPIRES 2/27/10

25¢ each

**with purchase of twenty-five
4x6" Kodak instant prints**






This coupon is intended for use by the original recipient only and is void if copied, scanned, transferred, purchased, sold or prohibited by law. Limit one offer per transaction. GiftCards and tax will not be included in determining purchase total. No cash value. Offer available at Target One Hour Photo Labs. Go to Target.com/photo for the location nearest you. One Hour service limited to machine capacity.

9856-0113-1882-4674-0306-4005-84

Print Powered By  **FormatDynamics™**

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

Texas A&M). He was able to bounce back and run the ball and throw the ball, and it was good."

Chris Dempsey: 303-954-1279 or
cdempsey@denverpost.com

Advertisement

TARGET WEB COUPON**EXPIRES 2/27/10**

25¢ each
with purchase of twenty-five
4x6" Kodak instant prints



This coupon is intended for use by the original recipient only and is void if copied, scanned, transferred, purchased, sold or prohibited by law. Limit one offer per transaction. GiftCards and tax will not be included in determining purchase total. No cash value. Offer available at Target One Hour Photo Labs. Go to Target.com/photo for the location nearest you. One Hour service limited to machine capacity.





9856-0113-1882-4674-0306-4005-84

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

cu football

Colorado eyeing ... The Cyclones

Colorado at Iowa State, noon Saturday

Posted: 11/09/2009 01:00:00 AM MST

Colorado Football

- **Watch** video of Nebraska-Colorado football Nov. 27 .
- **View** slide show of Nebraska-Colorado football Nov. 27 .
- **Analyze** boxscore for Nebraska-Colorado football Nov. 27 .
- **View** slide show of CU cornerback Jimmy Smith .
- **View** slide show of CU coach Dan Hawkins with his son Cody, a quarterback for the Buffs .
- **View** slide show of Colorado-Iowa State football Nov. 14 .
- **View** slide show of Texas A&M-Colorado football Nov. 7 .
- **Visit** the CU Stats Page for boxscores, Big 12 standings, team leaders and more .
- **Visit** Tom Kensler's All Things Buffs blog for a behind-the-scenes look at CU sports .

For the record: The Buffs (3-6, 2-3) travel to Ames to take on Iowa State (5-5, 2-4) as both teams aim for the top half of the Big 12 North.

Streaking: The Cyclones have dropped two straight games, to Oklahoma State and Texas A&M. The Buffs snapped a two-game skid Saturday by beating the Aggies.

Who's hot: ISU running back Alexander Robinson increased his career rushing total to

Advertisement

TARGET WEB COUPON
EXPIRES 2/27/10

25¢ each

with purchase of twenty-five
4x6" Kodak instant prints



This coupon is intended for use by the original recipient only and is void if copied, scanned, transferred, purchased, sold or prohibited by law. Limit one offer per transaction. GiftCards and tax will not be included in determining purchase total. No cash value. Offer available at Target One Hour Photo Labs. Go to Target.com/photo for the location nearest you. One Hour service limited to machine capacity.




9856-0113-1882-4674-0306-4005-84

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

2,032 yards. He has 864 yards this season, third best (96.0 per game) in the Big 12.

Who's not: Cyclones QB Austen Arnaud threw three interceptions against Oklahoma State. He ranks 10th in the Big 12 in passing yards. ISU is second to last in the conference in passing.

Key stat: ISU has allowed nine sacks this season — tied with Air Force for 10th in the nation — for just 47 yards lost.

FYI: Colorado rallied for a 28-24 victory last season in Boulder by stopping Iowa State on the goal line late.

Coachspeak: "To win the Big 12, you have to score points. We have to find a way to get more productive, execute at a higher rate and get that done in the final two games of the regular season." — ISU first-year coach Paul Rhoads, in The Des Moines Register

The Denver Post

Advertisement

TARGET WEB COUPON
EXPIRES 2/27/10

25¢ each

with purchase of twenty-five
4x6" Kodak instant prints



This coupon is intended for use by the original recipient only and is void if copied, scanned, transferred, purchased, sold or prohibited by law. Limit one offer per transaction. GiftCards and tax will not be included in determining purchase total. No cash value. Offer available at Target One Hour Photo Labs. Go to Target.com/photo for the location nearest you. One Hour service limited to machine capacity.




9856-0113-1882-4674-0306-4005-84

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

[\[PRINT\]](#) ESPN.com: Big 12[\[Print without images\]](#)

Monday, November 9, 2009

Big 12 power rankings scrambled after wild week of upsets

By Tim Griffin
ESPN.com*Posted by ESPN.com's Tim Griffin*

Here are this week's Big 12 power rankings after four upsets scrambled both divisions.

1. Texas: The Longhorns sputtered coming out of the gate, but still rebounded for an impressive victory over UCF. [Colt McCoy](#) stoked his Heisman Trophy credentials with a monster game, and [Jordan Shipley](#) had the best receiving game in school history. The defense also kept up with its steady play. Amazingly, the Horns had one of their strongest games of the season and still fell from second to third in the BCS.

2. Oklahoma State: No [Dez Bryant](#). No [Kendall Hunter](#). No worries for this group. The key for the Cowboys' recent surge has been Bill Young's defense, which limited an Iowa State team that was leading the conference in rushing to only 54 yards. It's helped the Cowboys win seven games in four consecutive seasons for the first time in the 109-season history of the program.

3. Texas Tech: The Red Raiders were off last week, but had more time to get their quarterback situation untracked as [Steven Sheffield](#) recovered from his foot surgery. The Red Raiders will face a huge challenge in the final three games as they meet Oklahoma, Oklahoma State and Baylor. Win out and they could be headed for the Cotton Bowl. But they haven't claimed a sweep of those three teams in the same season since 1996.

4. Kansas State: Bill Snyder's team isn't very pretty, but it just keeps winning. The Wildcats beat Kansas because [Daniel Thomas](#) rushed for a career-best 185 yards, and an opportunistic defense that is plus-11 in turnover margin this season flummoxed the Jayhawks and [Todd Reesing](#). The Wildcats can wrap up their first title since 2003 with a victory and two Nebraska losses. And can we give Snyder the Big 12's Coach of the Year award by acclimation right now?

5. Nebraska: The Cornhuskers have the most favorable schedule of any of the North challengers, so they now are in the favorite's role for the title. But their 10-3 victory over Oklahoma was set up because the game's only touchdown capped a 1-yard scoring drive after an interception. The quarterback situation remains scrambled, but Roy Helu Jr. came up big for the Cornhuskers when they really needed him to. But as well as the defense played, how much confidence can Bo Pelini have in an offense that had more punts (11) than points (10) or first downs (7)?

6. Oklahoma: In doing these weekly ratings since the conference began, I can't remember the Sooners being ranked as low during the Bob Stoops coaching era. The Sooners' offense had the lowest point production in Stoops' tenure against Nebraska and it was painful to watch. Oklahoma had field position all night as 11 of 16 drives ended up in Nebraska territory and it still couldn't produce a touchdown for the first time in the Stoops era. Sooners coaches have to hope that the five-interception effort by redshirt freshman [Landry Jones](#) -- a school record -- doesn't stunt his growth as a starter.

7. Kansas: Reesing's stature as the most productive quarterback in school history is being sullied by his

mystifying turnover slump late in his senior season. The Jayhawks are skidding out of control with four straight losses after five victories to start the season. The upcoming games appear tough, and a sixth victory that would ensure bowl eligibility will be a difficult accomplishment. Remember when many thought this team was the North Division's best?

8. Colorado: Don't look now, but the Buffaloes are sitting in third place in the North Division after their comeback victory over Texas A&M. [Tyler Hansen](#) had a resilient game as he rebounded from eight sacks to spark a surprisingly effective offense. The Buffaloes still are only a game away from being eliminated from bowl contention, but they have a better shot at the North title than Kansas and Missouri teams that were picked in front of them.

9. Texas A&M: The Aggies squandered a chance to become bowl eligible and their schedule gets tougher in the next several games. Their defense picked up eight sacks against Colorado, but they let too many receivers get free for big gains and it cost them the game. I'm still wondering why a field goal looks so good in the fourth quarter on the road, when the same situation was in place in the first quarter and didn't call for the gamble. The Aggies had good field position and strong special-teams play and still couldn't escape with a victory.

10. Iowa State: The Cyclones have two shots at bowl eligibility remaining and their best chance will be this week when Colorado visits. Paul Rhoads has done a masterful job with this team's confidence, but it has struggled offensively in the past three games. Over the last 13 quarters, the Cyclones have produced three touchdowns. Their bowl hopes depend on juicing production -- quickly.

11. Baylor: Great coaching job by Art Briles to keep the Bears engaged this season after the Robert Griffin injury. And his confidence paid off with the upset victory at Missouri where [Nick Florence](#) sliced through the Missouri defense for a school-record 427 passing yards. Brian Norwood's defense made some masterful adjustments after [Blaine Gabbert](#) blistered the Bears in the first half. It helped snap Baylor's 13-game conference road losing streak and ranked as the Big 12 upset of the season so far.

12. Missouri: The loss to Baylor has to rank as one of the worst of Gary Pinkel's coaching era. Nick Florence singled the Missouri defense and stretched their home losing streak to three games for the first time since 2004. The Tigers have been outscored 80-11 in the second half of five Big 12 games with the points coming from three field goals and a safety. But they still remain only one victory from bowl eligibility as a difficult challenge at North Division leader Kansas State approaches this week.

ESPN.com: [Help](#) | [PR Media Kit](#) | [Sales Media Kit](#) | [Report a Bug](#) | [Corrections](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Mobile](#) | [ESPN Shop](#) | [Jobs at ESPN](#) | [Supplier Information](#)

©2009 ESPN Internet Ventures. [Terms of Use](#) and [Privacy Policy and Safety Information/Your California Privacy Rights](#) are applicable to you. All rights reserved.

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

Longmont, Colorado
Friday, December 25, 2009

Publish Date: 11/9/2009

CU's O-line taken aback by numerous sacks

Bufs have given up 16 in past two games

By Justin Williams
© 2009 Longmont Times-Call

BOULDER — Colorado's offensive line isn't shying away from the blame it has been assessed over the past two games.

With the Bufs giving up 16 sacks over that span, the guys up front are a natural scapegoat.

"We just keep on grinding away, working on it every day," CU offensive line coach Denver Johnson said. "We'll just continue to stress the fundamentals.

"There's no magic wand, no pixie dust to make it go away."

But to be fair, not all the blame rests squarely on the offensive line's shoulders. There were a couple of plays during Saturday's eight-sack day against Texas A&M in which quarterback Tyler Hansen probably held on to the ball too long, and a couple others in which running backs missed blitz pick-ups.

"When it's a run or pass, it takes 11," Johnson said. "But whenever there is a sack, it falls back on to the offensive line, and oftentimes, that's where it belongs. But certainly not every time.

"We're not into trying to point fingers at anyone else. We're just trying to handle our part of it. That's the way our kids approach it, and I appreciate that."

While Johnson was quick to accept the blame on behalf of his line, he was also quick to stick up for his guys.

"It's not a lack of effort, it's not a lack of attention and it's certainly not a lack of desire or competing," he said. "We've been playing against some good people, and we've got some guys that are still trying to improve and get better."

Johnson also pointed to the shifting that's gone on along the line this season as a possible culprit.

"We've been playing Ryan Miller on the edge, and he's probably better suited inside," Johnson said. "Now, with Bryce Givens back in the fold, that will hopefully allow us to make that move. There's a lot of dynamics involved.

Givens, who had missed time this season for what CU has called "personal reasons," returned to action Saturday. Johnson said the redshirt freshman did some "nice things" and that the holding penalty called on him was a "marginal call."

"We started off the season with him out there, and there was some great promise there," Johnson said. "He kind of got off track a little bit there, but apparently he's back and with us fully now. Bryce is a lot more athletic. He's a little

FIRST LOOK

A quick glimpse at CU's next opponent:

Who: Iowa State (5-5, 2-4)

Where: Jack Trice Stadium, Ames, Iowa

When: Saturday, noon., no TV

Notes: Since upsetting Nebraska in Lincoln, the Cyclones have lost two straight — at Texas A&M and Saturday's 34-8 loss at home to Oklahoma State. Iowa State entered the game with the Big 12's top-ranked rushing offense, but the Cowboys held the Cyclones to a season-low 54 yards on the ground. On the contrary, Oklahoma State racked up 473 yards of total offense. ... Last season, the Bufs held Iowa State at the 1-yard line as time ran out to preserve a 28-24 win in Boulder. Cyclones Quarterback Austen Arnaud threw for 215 yards in the loss. ... The last time the Bufs were in Ames (2007), Iowa State handed CU a 31-28 loss.

more nimble and quicker on the edge against those speed rush guys.”

Johnson said “we’ll see” when asked if Givens would start for the Buffs at Iowa State on Saturday, adding, “We’ll continue to increase his presence on the edge and go from there.”

POLK AILING: Ray Polk said his foot was “killing” him Sunday, a day after the CU safety played against Texas A&M on a broken toe.

Polk, who was walking with a boot on his left foot Sunday, said he broke the toe while helping a friend move a dresser on Friday. The dresser fell onto the side of his foot.

He said there was really no decision on whether to suit up or not Saturday.

“I have to play,” Polk said. “I’m not going to leave my team behind.”

Polk said he received cortisone shots before the game and at halftime to relieve some of the pain. But toward the end of each half, he said, the shots wore off.

“I think it might have slowed me down a little bit,” he said. “But for the most part, I think the doctors did a great job.”

Polk said he plans to use the same pain-relief strategy this Saturday at Iowa State. In fact, he said he’ll likely deal with the issue for the rest of the season.

STILL ALIVE: Colorado sent out a press release Sunday, detailing the scenario it would take for the Buffs to win the Big 12 North title.

The following would have to take place, according to the release:

1. Colorado wins out — If so, the Buffaloes would be 5-3 in the North Division, and would eliminate Iowa State, Kansas and Missouri.
2. Kansas State loses its last two to Missouri and Nebraska — K-State would own a 4-4 league record and be 3-2 in divisional play if the above were to happen.
3. Nebraska beats Kansas State and loses to Colorado, no matter what it does against Kansas — Nebraska would thus own either a 5-3 or 4-4 league record but would lose a head-to-head tiebreaker with Colorado if tied with CU at 5-3.

Such high hopes are not made without precedent: It should be noted that the Buffs were 1-4 in the Big 12 in 2004 before winning their final three games to claim the North title.

Justin Williams can be reached at jwilliams@times-call.com.