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Jayhawks keeping it simple as CU awaits

By Patrick Ridgell
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BOULDER — This might sound familiar.

A Big 12 defense, recently torched by an opponent, will simplify things in order to help its defenders play faster.

That was the move Colorado coaches made after Toledo lit up their defense. CU answered in two of its next three games with a shutout against Wyoming and a good effort Saturday at Texas.

This time, it's a move being made by No. 17 Kansas, which, according to coach Mark Mangino, needs to scale things back some after Iowa State went for 512 yards while losing 41-36 Saturday to the Jayhawks. Kansas (5-0, 1-0 Big 12) visits CU on Saturday (5 p.m., FSN).

"We have to do the things in our package that have been good to us and try not to get too fancy or sophisticated," Mangino said during Monday's Big 12 teleconference. "Simpler is better sometimes."

Kansas enters the week allowing the most passing yards in the Big 12, 259.8 per game. It has played Northern Colorado, UTEP, Duke, and Southern Miss, in addition to Iowa State. The teeth of its schedule awaits. After CU, it faces Oklahoma at home. It closes November with games against Nebraska, Texas and Missouri.

Mangino said preparing for CU quarterback Tyler Hansen, who'll make his first start of 2009 Saturday, is "a challenge, but not anything that's overwhelming." He said Monday that he would reserve judgment until he had studied more film of Hansen.

"We can go back and look at last year (when Hansen played)," Mangino said. "We know a little bit about Tyler Hansen and his background."

REESING FOR HEISMAN? Mangino said Kansas will not launch some sort of a Heisman Award campaign on behalf of Todd Reesing. But he sounds convinced his senior quarterback merits consideration for the award.

"The true way to judge Todd Reesing is, you have to watch him play," Mangino said. "He's not all stats. When you watch him play ... you walk away saying that kid is a pretty darn good football player."

Reesing's statistics suggest so. He's second in the Big 12 to Texas Tech's Taylor Potts in passing yards a game, at 315.8. He's second to Oklahoma State's Zac Robinson in pass efficiency, with a mark of 157.6. He's third in total offense with 336 yards per game, and he's thrown 13 touchdowns against only three interceptions.

"He has been good for a long time, so he's not just a flash in the pan," Mangino said. "He's been playing at a high level for three years, and each and every year, he gets better and better."

Reesing is 3-0 against the Buffs.



Kansas quarterback Todd Reesing, right, hands off to running back Toben Opurum during their game against Iowa State on Saturday in Lawrence, Kan. **Orlin Wagner/AP**

EXTRA POINTS: CU coach Dan Hawkins did not appear on Monday's Big 12 teleconference because he was at a dentist appointment. His assistant did not have the call on Hawkins' computerized schedule. Hawkins is scheduled to hold his weekly news conference today at the Dal Ward Center. ... The Big 12 on Monday did not announce the start time and TV plans for CU's Oct. 24 game at Kansas State. The league is waiting to see if FCS-C wants to air it. FSN, Versus and ABC are set to air other Big 12 games.

Read Patrick Ridgell's CU sports blog at www.timescall.com/blogs/ridgell. He can be reached at pridgell@times-call.com.

Ringo: Mangino`s Heisman talk a little early

Kyle Ringo Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

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I have to agree with Kansas coach Mark Mangino about one of the statements he made Monday morning on the Big 12 Conference football coaches` teleconference.

In talking about his quarterback, Todd Reesing, he said he believes the senior deserves to be in the Heisman Trophy discussion. It might be a little early for that.

But Mangino also made the point that anyone who has seen Reesing play over the past three seasons or in the first five games this year, walks away saying, "That kid`s a pretty dog-gone good football player."

I`ve had that very experience the last three years watching Reesing lead the Jayhawks to wins over Colorado and again watching on television as he beat Missouri last season.

He came off the bench at Kansas in 2006, burning his redshirt season at the midway point, to direct the Jayhawks to a come-from-behind win in the second half. He beat the Buffs again in 2007 and 2008 and in every instance his playmaking ability and his desire to be the difference-maker was a huge factor.

Those traits might well earn him serious consideration for the Heisman later this year, especially if he can take the Jayhawks to their first appearance in the Big 12 championship game in Dallas. But, at this point with wins over Northern Colorado, UTEP, Duke, Southern Miss and Iowa State, mentioning the Heisman is a bit too much.

"He certainly merits the right to be a part of the Heisman conversation," Mangino said. "When you look at him statistically, you`re impressed. But I think the true way you judge Todd Reesing is you have to see him play. If you watch him play, the way he just has great leadership, the way he is in control, how he can take what looks to be a minus-yardage play and turn it into a gain or a big gain. The real appreciation you have for Todd Reesing is after you watch him play."

Reesing has completed 133 of 192 pass attempts this season for 1,579 yards and 13 touchdowns. He has thrown only three interceptions. He is coming off a win over Iowa State in which he threw for 442 yards and four scores. He also ran for 12 yards and a touchdown.

Reesing owes some of his success to the great chemistry he has with stellar wide receivers Dezmon Briscoe and Kerry Meier, who combined for 28 catches and nearly 300 yards against Iowa State. It will be interesting to see how the Buffs defend that trio this week.

"There is no question I think when it comes to the pitching and catching business, we can compete with anybody in the country," Mangino said.

Make that two statements I`d call accurate from the big fella.

Mangino talks CU

Mangino decided not to comment on new CU starting quarterback Tyler Hansen`s abilities, but he did talk about the problems it poses having little film of Hansen in this year`s offense to study before Saturday`s game.

"You always like to prepare for a team that has had the same quarterback in there for awhile because you`re always going to play to the strengths of your quarterback," Mangino said. "I see it as a small challenge, but I think we`ll go back and look at last year. We know a little bit about Tyler Hansen and his background and (what) his really strong suits are. It`s a challenge but it`s not anything that is overwhelming."

Familiar problem

Mangino said he is somewhat concerned about the way his defense has been playing, particularly in nearly losing to Iowa State last week.

Like Colorado coaches earlier this year, Mangino is considering simplifying the defense this week in preparation for the Buffs. Kansas has

allowed the bulk of its opponents' points for the season to be scored the past two weeks.

"I think we need to do the things in our package that have been really good for us and try not to get too fancy or too sophisticated," Mangino said. "Simple is better sometimes."

The Jayhawks appear to be a pretty solid defense overall. They are 108th in the country against the pass, but 14th against the run and 29th in points allowed.

On the tube

The Big 12 announced Colorado's game at Kansas State on Oct. 24 will not be televised and a game time hasn't been determined. Here are the Big 12 games on television this week: Texas vs. Oklahoma in Dallas, 10 a.m., ABC; Texas Tech at Nebraska, 1:30 p.m., ABC; Texas A&M at Kansas State, 5 p.m., Fox College Sports; Kansas at Colorado, 5 p.m., FSN; Missouri at Oklahoma State, 7:15 p.m., ESPN2.

Between the hashes

Texas Tech quarterback Steven Sheffield, Nebraska defensive tackle Hdamakong Suh and Texas wide receiver/ punt returner Jordan Shipley were named Big 12 players of the week. ... Oklahoma State coach Mike Gundy hasn't ruled out wide receiver Dez Bryant returning to the team at some point, after being ruled ineligible after lying to the NCAA about his interaction with a former professional player. Gundy said Bryant is in the reinstatement process. ... Texas A&M quarterback Jerrod Johnson has established a new conference record with 228 consecutive passes thrown without an interception. ... Nebraska's defense has allowed a total of seven points in the first quarter of five games this fall. ... Baylor had gone eight straight games with at least 100 yards in rushing and 16 straight with a rushing touchdown. Both streaks ended against Oklahoma when the Bears rushed for six yards.

Who's hot?

Missouri linebacker Andrew Gachkar has grabbed all three of his career fumble recoveries in the past three games. Last week against Nebraska he also had five tackles, a sack and a forced fumble.

Who's not?

The Kansas State defense surrendered 66 points and seven touchdown passes to Texas Tech, which was being led by backup quarterback Steven Sheffield. Imagine what might have happened had starter Taylor Potts played? Sheffield threw for 370 yards in the first half, a new Texas Tech record.

Big 12 Power Rankings

(Previous week's ranking and team's record in parentheses).

- 1. Texas (1st/5-0, 2-0)** -- I came home from Texas believing there is no way Colt McCoy has a chance to win the Heisman unless he picks up his play considerably. The Longhorns looked average for much of the Colorado game and it won't be a surprise if they get beat once or twice in the next seven weeks.
- 2. Oklahoma State (2nd/4-1, 1-0)** -- The Cowboys are going to miss Dez Bryant in big games against other powers in the division, but they seem to be getting along without him and Kendall Hunter so far. That's the sign of a good team.
- 3. Oklahoma (3rd/3-2, 1-0)** -- Sam Bradford is back and we know he has a capable backup, but we think the defense will carry the Sooners and might make the difference between a fourth consecutive conference title or watching Texas or OSU go in their place.
- 4. Kansas (4th/5-0, 1-0)** -- Mark Mangino might think Todd Reesing deserves Heisman consideration, but his defense has looked suspect several times already and might cost this team its first trip to the championship game.
- 5. Nebraska (6th/4-1, 1-0)** -- The Cornhuskers stole a win at Missouri and deserve credit for it. It's beginning to look like the Cornhuskers might be the best team in the North Division, but we'll know more after this week against Texas Tech, which has given Big Red fits recently.
- 6. Missouri (5th/4-1, 0-1)** -- The Tigers' inexperience caught up with them when adversity hit against a good team. We could see this team being on a three-game losing streak when they come to Boulder on Halloween, but it's still one of the most talented in the conference.

7. Texas Tech (7/4-2, 1-1) -- It was a bit of a surprise to see the Red Raiders roll up 66 with a backup quarterback against Kansas State. The Red Raiders are at Nebraska this week and have lost their only other two road games this season.

8. Baylor (8th/3-2, 0-1) -- No one expected the Bears to beat Oklahoma, but this week does come with some expectations. If coach Art Briles is going to lead the Bears back to the postseason, this team has to win at Iowa State.

9. Texas A&M (11th/3-2, 0-1) -- Coach Mike Sherman's team showed some grit putting up a tough fight at home against Oklahoma State. Now we'll find out where the Aggies stand as they have consecutive road games in the next two weeks.

10. Iowa State (11th/3-3, 0-2) -- The Cyclones nearly beat Kansas last week and have developed one of the league's best rushing attacks. Quarterback Austen Arnaud is playing well.

11. Kansas State (10th/3-3, 1-1) -- Allowing 66 points at Texas Tech has us believing this team could eventually land in the cellar. Then again, we wouldn't be surprised to see a Bill Snyder coached team show some real improvement toward the end of the year. It's a roller coaster ride for now.

12. Colorado (12th/1-4, 0-1) -- The Buffs started the season at No. 7 in this list and they played like they were worthy of that for 2½ quarters at Texas. They stay here until they put a complete game together against a team other than Wyoming.

-- Kyle Ringo

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Developing News

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Roesler: Colorado home advantage to test Kansas

By [Nicolas Roesler](#)

Tuesday, October 13, 2009

Kansas must be on upset alert heading into Colorado this weekend after its performance against Iowa State.

Yes, Todd Reesing posted incredible numbers again last weekend. Throwing for 442 yards is hardly a statistic one can frown upon. But watching the game told a different story. On Kansas' second-to-last drive of Saturday's seesaw battle, two of Reesing's passes hit the dirt on a drive that could have sealed the game against Iowa State. Instead, as Iowa State threw one last pass to the end zone, thousands of freezing faces in the crowd were stuck in mirror images of Macaulay Culkin from "Home Alone." One of Reesing's errant passes came on third down, with only two yards to gain. Reesing threw a pass to wide receiver Jonathan Wilson that hit the ground before reaching Wilson's hands. That type of throw can be the difference between victory or defeat in the Big 12, especially when traveling to Colorado, a place that feeds off of opponents' little mistakes.

There's something in the air, or lack of air, at Colorado's Folsom Field that causes trouble for opposing teams. The high altitude at the stadium, the surrounding jagged mountains and the close proximity of the student section to the field can intimidate visiting teams. Colorado has been able to pull off big upsets in years past, even when its record is less than respectable.

In 2007 the Buffaloes beat the No. 4 Oklahoma Sooners 27-24 in a season when they only won six out of 13 games. Last year, Colorado beat No. 21 West Virginia at home 17-14 but finished the year with a record of 5-7. The Buffaloes have a knack for somehow pulling off victories in their home environment, and the Jayhawks must do everything they can to prevent that.

Colorado's offense, which has struggled all year, has the opportunity to gain confidence against a Kansas defense that showed some uninspired play against Iowa State. If Kansas can stop Colorado early, take the fans out of the game and force the Buffaloes to rely on their passing attack, the Jayhawks will have a good chance to win.

Evidence of this came last week when Colorado led at halftime against the No. 2 Texas Longhorns IN Texas. Colorado, helped by some lucky plays, gained confidence in the first half and looked as if it might be able to pull off the impossible. But Texas, playing in front of a home crowd, came back in the second half.

Colorado will be starting a new quarterback against Kansas on Saturday. Tyler Hansen, who will replace Cody Hawkins, will pose a double threat to the Kansas defense with his ability to scramble as well as pass. Corralling Hansen and throwing him off rhythm will be the key to keeping Colorado off the scoreboard and out of Kansas' way to the Big 12 North title.

Edited by Nick Gerik

[LJWorld.com](http://www2.ljworld.com)

Heisman worthy?

Mangino: QB deserves trophy consideration



[Kevin Anderson](#)

Kansas Quarterback Todd Reesing (5) chats with coach Mark Mangino after scoring against Iowa State. Mangino praised his quarterback Monday, saying Reesing deserves to be in the conversation for the Heisman Trophy. [Enlarge photo](#)

October 13, 2009

Mark Mangino said before his Kansas University football team's season began that fans shouldn't expect to see any type of "Todd Reesing for Heisman" campaigning on behalf of the school.

But that didn't stop Kansas' eighth-year coach from making a brief plug for his senior signal-caller during Monday's Big 12 coaches teleconference.

"We've only played five games, but he certainly — and this is an opinion — he certainly merits the right to be a part of the Heisman conversation," said Mangino, whose Jayhawks are 5-0 and 1-0 in the Big 12 heading into Saturday's 6 p.m. road matchup with Colorado (FSKC Sunflower Broadband 36, 236). "When you look at him statistically, you're impressed, but I think the true way you judge Todd Reesing is you have to see him play.

"If you watch him play, the way he just has great leadership, the way he's in control, the way he can take what looks to be a minus-yardage play and turn it into a gain or a big gain, the real appreciation you have for Todd Reesing is after you watch him play. It's not fair to just look at his statistics."

At the same time, the statistics aren't exactly hard on the eyes.

Following Saturday's 442-yard, four-touchdown performance in a victory over Iowa State, he ranks in the top 12 nationally in passing yards (1,579, tied for ninth), passing yards per game (315.8, fifth), total offense (336, fifth) and passing efficiency (157.6, 12th) — numbers that compare favorably to the three players hyped as the Heisman favorites during the preseason: former winners Tim Tebow of Florida and Sam Bradford of Oklahoma and Texas' Colt McCoy.

Tebow and Bradford have missed time with injuries this season, while McCoy has had, by his standards, a sub-par year statistically.

Reesing, meanwhile, has quietly and successfully gone about his business, taking advantage of standout receivers Kerry Meier (43 catches, 477 yards, five touchdowns) and Dezmon Briscoe (30 catches, 517 yards, three scores) and an inexperienced offensive line that, to this point, has proved to be a pleasant surprise.

And the result has been a soft rumbling of mid-season Heisman talk surrounding the Jayhawks' diminutive star.

"I've kept my word — we're not having any Heisman campaigns, and we're not going to do any of that," Mangino said. "But I think when you watch him play, whether you're an opposing coach, an opposing fan, a broadcaster or a journalist that covers the game, you walk away saying, 'That kid's a pretty doggone good football player.'"

Colorado starting Hansen over struggling Hawkins

After a 1-4 start — and the ensuing scrutiny that came with it — Colorado coach Dan Hawkins officially benched his starting quarterback — son Cody — this week in favor of red-shirt sophomore Tyler Hansen.

The younger Hawkins, who has struggled greatly early on, had led the Buffaloes to a surprising 14-10 halftime lead over then-No. 2 Texas on Saturday, but was benched in favor of Hansen after throwing two second-half interceptions that allowed the Longhorns to pull away for a 38-14 victory.

Following the game, Dan Hawkins and Colorado offensive coordinator Eric Kiesau indicated that Hansen will be the team's starting quarterback for the remainder of the season, meaning the Jayhawks will spend the week preparing for a relative unknown.

"I see it as a small challenge," said Mangino, who declined to offer his assessment of Hansen until he'd seen more film. "But I think we go back and look at last year and we know a little bit about Tyler Hansen and his background and what his really strong suits are. So it's a challenge, but it's not anything that's overwhelming."

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