

Missed opportunities doom CU Buffs

By Kyle Ringo Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 10/01/2009 09:16:26 PM MDT

MORGANTOWN, W.Va. - Colorado coach Dan Hawkins called his team's performance in the fourth game of the season Thursday night easily its best so far this fall, but it wasn't good enough for a win against West Virginia.

Quarterback Cody Hawkins threw three interceptions and the Buffs squandered four Mountaineer turnovers in a frustrating 35-24 loss that put a nail in the coffin of any hopes still lingering for the Buffs to meet their coach's offseason challenge of 10 victories this season.

The Colorado defense was simplified once again, but its parts are still slow and too often out of position. Those issues led to more big plays, which made the difference in what otherwise turned out to be a tug of war.

The Buffs surrendered plays of 77, 56 and 48 yards with each leading to scores. Meanwhile the CU offense was unable to answer with explosion plays of its own. The Buffs were forced to grind out long drives, and even when they put themselves in position for points, they still found ways to come up empty.

"When you play a good football team, you've got to maximize those opportunities," Dan Hawkins said. "When you maximize those opportunities, then you have a chance to have a different outcome."

Colorado actually ran 23 more offensive plays than West Virginia, but gained 392 total yards compared with the Mountaineers' 405 yards. Tailbacks from both teams enjoyed good outings while each quarterback was shaky.

West Virginia's Noel Devine ran for a career best 220 yards on 22 carries, for a gaudy 10 yards per carry average.

"He's just so quick and so fast that he is going to take the ball wherever he wants it," CU linebacker and tri-captain Jeff Smart said. "We did a good job of reading the plays they were running, but it could be a play that is going to the left and he will stop and take it back to the right."

CU tailback Rodney Stewart has similar ability with less speed and he used it to rush for 105 yards, his second consecutive 100-yard outing. But the Buffs couldn't get the ball in the end zone often enough.

"Any time you get in a game and don't take advantage of your opportunities, the game can go the other way," Stewart said.

Just when the Colorado defense appeared to get a grip on the long gains it had had allowed through the first three quarters, the Mountaineers proved they didn't need the big play to find the end zone.

Quarterback Jarrett Brown led his team on a 69-yard drive in 14 plays eating up more than 6 minutes of the fourth quarter of a close game. Running back Ryan Clarke plowed in from one yard to give the Mountaineers a two-score advantage and assure most of the 60,055 in attendance would leave happy.

"Bottom line, could we have won the football game? Sure," Hawkins said. "You've got to leave it at that. We didn't make enough plays to win the football game. That's one side of it. The other side of it is, I was proud of the way they battled. ... That's our best effort, by far."

The challenges don't get any easier for the 1-3 Buffs. They head to Austin, Texas, next week to face the No. 2-ranked team in the nation before returning home for a game against nationally ranked Kansas.

Colorado's road losing streak was extended to seven games if a contest last season against Florida State on a "neutral" field in Jacksonville is included. The streak extends back to Oct. 27, 2007 at Texas Tech.

It didn't take long for West Virginia to get the scoreboard moving. The Mountaineers misfired on their first offensive plays when Brown overthrew wide receiver Alric Arnett, who was striding down the middle of the field wide open. Tailback Noel

Devine took a handoff on the next play and sprinted 77 yards off left tackle for a touchdown.

It looked like the Buffs were going to produce Toledo part two.

Colorado answered on the ensuing drive when Stewart sprinted 36 yards on a touchdown run that ended with him diving to touch the ball to the pylon as a defender attempted to push him out of bounds.

Colorado could have taken a 13-7 lead into the second quarter, but Aric Goodman's adventures in kicking continued. The Buffs' place-kicker missed wide left from 40 yards and hit the left upright on a 45-yard attempt.

Those misses played a big part in why the Buffs were able to turn four first-half West Virginia fumbles into only three points. Three of those fumbles came from the Mountaineer offense and one came after J.T. Thomas intercepted Cody Hawkins but gave the ball right back to the Buffs.

West Virginia scored late in the first half on a six-yard touchdown pass from Brown to wide receiver Jock Sanders, who beat Cha'pelle Brown on a slant route. The score was set up by another long run from Devine, who scampered 56 yards before being caught from behind.

Cody Hawkins appeared to have the Buffs in position for another field goal try in the final minute of the half as he led the two-minute offense, but his poorly underthrown pass to Demetrius Sumler down the sideline was intercepted by safety Sidney Glover.

Another big play capped the Mountaineers first drive of the second half. Brown made Colorado pay for blitzing a cornerback by throwing to the receiver who was left uncovered on the sideline.

Wide receiver Brad Starks danced down the sideline on 48-yard score after safety Patrick Mahnke failed to get over and make the tackle. West Virginia led 21-10.

When CU got the ball back, Dan Hawkins gambled on fourth down at the West Virginia 29-yard line by going for it instead of attempting another field goal. CU needed seven yards but scored on a 29-yard touchdown pass from Cody Hawkins to McKnight.

After West Virginia's long touchdown sealed the win, the Mountaineers picked up a late score when the Buffs turned the ball over on downs deep in their own territory. CU added a touchdown in the final three seconds when Hawkins connected with Markques Simas for a 20-yard touchdown pass.

Close Window

Send To Printer

Woelk: Key mistakes squander CU's chance to steal win

Neill Woelk Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 10/02/2009 12:13:10 AM MDT

The guess here is that nobody in black and gold is buying moral victories this morning.

The Colorado Buffaloes had a chance to steal an unlikely win on the road -- on national television, no less -- and they let it slip away Thursday night. They had the opportunity to right their season, soothe the sting of two shocking losses to open the season and head into Big 12 play with a little momentum -- but they didn't take advantage of the openings that were presented.

This was not a game the Buffs were supposed to win. It's not even a game they should have won. West Virginia is clearly the better team, and proved it on Thursday.

But it was a game the Buffs could have won, which makes the missed opportunity even more difficult to swallow.

Now, there is no taste of redemption for the Buffs this morning. There is only a growing hunger, a 1-3 record and two games against top 20 foes directly on the horizon.

The tally of CU miscues turned out to be lengthy. Three missed field goals, two of which would have given the Buffs a 16-14 halftime lead. An interception at the end of the first half that ruined at least a first down, maybe a touchdown, and certainly a field goal attempt. Two more interceptions, a couple more missed wide open receivers and the disturbingly normal list of big plays yielded by the defense were also part of the equation.

All this against a West Virginia offense that did its

best to keep the Buffs in the game with three first-half fumbles.

Even when West Virginia stopped giving the ball away, the Mountaineers helped keep the Buffs in the game. After the Buffs had pulled to within 21-17 in the third quarter, WVU insisted upon attempting to prove it could throw the ball. Twice, Colorado's defense came up with stops -- and twice, Colorado failed to convert.

Two penalties and an interception on third-and-21 halted one possession. A three-and-out ensued on the second, after the Buffs had sacked WVU quarterback Jarrett Brown on consecutive downs.

And finally, the Mountaineers seemed to get the message. Instead of trying to showcase Brown's heralded passing ability -- something not apparent in this game -- they turned to running back Noel Devine in the fourth quarter. Devine to the right side, Devine right again, and just for a change, Devine to the right. Twelve plays later, eight of them with the ball in Devine's hands, the Mountaineers finally had a 28-17 cushion.

Game over.

Certainly, the 35-24 loss did not elevate the disaster scale to the same level as the Buffs' embarrassing loss in Toledo. This was at least a respectable showing, and there were some positives:

A running game that showed promise, but still nothing that resembled consistency. Rodney Stewart put up 105 yards and a touchdown on the board, but CU still finished with just 100 net yards on the ground.

A defense that played better against the pass, yielding just 148 yards in the air while also recording three sacks. The defense also forced three turnovers in the first half -- but saw the offense produce just one field goal from all three chances.

Maybe most importantly, the mental resolution to stay in the game. Despite giving up a 77-yard touchdown on WVU's second play of the game, and despite giving up a long touchdown drive to open the second half, the Buffs never folded.

They were within four heading into the fourth quarter and had a chance to win.

But those positives are silver linings to a cloud that grows darker each week.

After the game, Buff head coach Dan Hawkins did his best to sound upbeat.

"I thought this was our best game by far, no doubt," he told KOA radio. "Our guys battled and scrapped."

But trouble is, CU fans are no longer content to hear "battled and scrapped," not in the fourth game of the head coach's fourth year. With a meeting with No. 2 Texas dead ahead, 1-3 looks very much like 1-4 -- and we won't even hazard a guess as to what happens the week after when Kansas visits Boulder.

Simply, there are issues that should have been solved by now. While we were less than impressed with the play of WVU's Brown (148 yards passing and his share of missed receivers), he at least brings to the table the ability to run.

Colorado's Cody Hawkins, meanwhile, threw for 292 yards and a pair of touchdowns -- but he also threw three interceptions, and he is never a threat to keep a defense honest with his legs.

If the Buffs were blessed with a power running game and a stingy defense, the quarterback play would not be so crucial (remember Buff QB Robert Hodge in 2002?).

But on a team that still has virtually no margin for error, every Hawkins error is magnified -- as are missed field goals, big plays given up by the defense and the inability to convert golden opportunities.

We won't buy into the argument that quarterback play is all that's keeping this team from being a competitive Big 12 squad (someone else allowed the Mountaineers to run for 255 yards, and that wasn't the quarterback kicking field goals).

But it's certainly a factor -- enough so, anyway, that when it comes down to expecting the quarterback on this team to make the difference, it too often means a difference on the negative side of the ledger.

What happens next?

Don't count on a quarterback change. Backup Tyler Hansen has been promised a redshirt season, and we're guessing he won't be willing to repeat last year, when he yanked his redshirt for a brief stint in the middle of the season.

Thus, it means the improvement the Buffs showed Thursday night in other areas will have to continue at a dramatic pace to widen that margin for error.

If that happens, the Buff could still scrape a few wins out of this season.

But with eight games remaining, that's not a bet most CU fans are anxious to make.

Close Window

Send To Printer

Bohn exploring more ways to raise money for CU

AD researching stadium naming rights, donor relationships

By Kyle Ringo Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 10/02/2009 12:01:59 AM MDT

MORGANTOWN, [W.Va.](#) -- The University of Colorado is exploring naming rights opportunities for Folsom Field that could pump millions into an athletic department badly in need of additional revenue outside its traditional sources.

The department is also researching ways to muster more donations and improve the overall experience donors have when visiting campus on game days.

Athletic director Mike Bohn watched the Buffs play at West Virginia on Thursday and mingled with a group of more than 400 boosters and alumni from the Washington D.C. area before departing this morning for Louisville, Ky.

Bohn is scheduled to visit with Louisville athletic director Tom Jurich to learn more about the specifics of that school's stadium naming rights deal with Papa John's pizza. Bohn and Jurich worked together at Colorado State in 1996 and 1997.

Papa John's ownership committed \$5 million toward construction of the stadium in Louisville in 1996 and has since pledged another \$10 million toward expansion. If CU was able to land a similar deal with a Colorado-based company, it would enable the athletic department to fund several projects, including the long-awaited basketball practice facility at the Coors Events Center.

Bohn said last month he expects to break ground on the practice facility by the end of the year. He has been reluctant to discuss how the facility will be paid for, but he says fundraising for the project is on track to keep that timeline. During his trip to Louisville, Bohn also plans to research how Jurich and his staff service the Cardinals' donors and season-ticket holders in every facet of those relationships. It is part of a project Bohn started earlier this year when he spent time on the Oklahoma and Kansas campuses evaluating how those athletic departments handle fundraising and donor seating, parking and donor relations.

Bohn is scheduled to spend the weekend at Purdue where he will continue the project and watch the Purdue athletic department in action on game day Saturday when the Boilermakers host Northwestern.

Close Window

Send To Printer

CU's McKnight eclipses Johnson's receiving record

By Kyle Ringo Camera Sports Writer MORGANTOWN, W.Va. -- Wide receiver Scotty McKnight set a Colorado record on Thursday, eclipsing Johnson's receiving record.

Posted: 10/02/2009 12:00:33 AM MDT

Espinoza breaks thumb

Walk-on wide receiver and punt return man Jason Espinoza entered Thursday's game as the Buffs' second leading receiver, but he was unable to play on offense because of a broken thumb suffered earlier this week in practice.

He said he is scheduled to undergo surgery on the thumb today and hopes to be able to play next week in the Big 12 Conference opener at Texas.

Espinoza said he attempted to practice with the injury this week after team doctors numbed it, but he still felt too much pain to be effective. Espinoza missed most of last season after breaking his collarbone twice.

Espinoza was able to return punts because the cradle position with which he catches kicks does not hurt his hand.

Ittis out

CU center Mike Ittis did not play Thursday after suffering a concussion in practice Sunday. Ittis said he will return to the lineup for the Texas game. Fourth-year walk-on Keenan Stevens played the entire game in Ittis' place.

On the bench

Fans will undoubtedly wonder where tailback Darrell Scott was Thursday. Scott once again was a non-factor in the game, getting four carries for just five yards.

"You saw (Rodney) Stewart didn't you?" Hawkins said. "Did you see him? He was pretty effective wasn't he? That's part of it. Darrell started practicing a little bit more this week and you've got to look at the flow of the game and how that goes. But Rodney was just so dog-gone effective, it's hard to get him out of the game."

The road east

The Buffs haven't won a game east of the Mississippi River since the season opener in 1995 at Wisconsin. They have lost nine consecutive games east of the Mississippi. The Buffs' next opportunity to snap that streak might not come for awhile unless they play a postseason game in the east at some point this year or in the next two seasons.

Colorado has no road games scheduled east of the Mississippi until the 2012 season when it will play at the University of Minnesota. New TCF Bank Stadium is located less than a mile east of the Mississippi in Minneapolis.

CU has traveled 4,960 miles roundtrip to Toledo and West Virginia in nonconference play this season, more than any other Big 12 team. The Buffs are 7-21 all-time in games played in the Eastern time zone.

Cody Hawkins career watch

Colorado quarterback Cody Hawkins moved into third place on the school's career passing yards list Thursday passing Koy Detmer. Hawkins has thrown for 5,630 yards in less than 21/2 seasons as the starter.

Hawkins needs just two more touchdown passes to become the school's career leader in that category. He has thrown 43 touchdown passes, including two Thursday. Former Buff Joel Klatt threw for 44 in three seasons as the starter.

Big play count

The Colorado defense has now given up 23 plays of 20 yards or more in four games, including four long gains against the Mountaineers. CU has surrendered 13 passing plays of 20 yards or more and 10 rushing plays.

Notable

Nick Kasa made his debut on the defensive line for CU recording one assisted tackle. The ballyhooed defensive end became the fifth true freshman to play for the Buffs this season. He missed the first three games of the year after suffering a sprained knee in fall camp. ... CU had 10 penalties in its last outing against Wyoming. The Buffs cut that number down to five against West Virginia. ... Colorado officials said 1,600 CU fans attended Thursday's game with many of them driving to Morgantown from the Washington D.C. area. The Washington D.C. alumni group organized an effort among its 6,000 members to attend the game.

[Close Window](#)[Send To Printer](#)

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

sports

Bufs need balance from top playmakers

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

Posted: 10/02/2009 01:00:00 AM MDT

MORGANTOWN, W.Va. — Until the clock showed 6 1/2 minutes remained in West Virginia's 35-24 victory Thursday night, only one Colorado wide receiver had a catch.

Junior Scotty McKnight, a workhorse with a big heart in a small frame, caught nine passes and needs some help. A glimmer of hope in the form of a 20-yard touchdown catch by sophomore Mark-ques Simas with three seconds left in the game might be just what the offense is looking for.

McKnight certainly thinks so.

"Markques made a nice catch. That's a good sign," McKnight said. "Obviously, I'm an experienced guy, so I feel like they're going to try to get me the ball. We've got some young guys, and once they get going a little bit, it will be a little

more balanced. We've got to get those guys up to speed."

Extras

- View photos from the CU vs. West Virginia game .

Simas finished with two receptions for 23 yards. No other CU wideout had a reception, although junior college transfer Andre Simmons and true freshman Will Jefferson got in the game and had some pass plays called their way.

Simas wasn't in the mood to accept congratulations for his first two career catches as a college player, considering the final score. But he is ready to start making an impact.

"I felt comfortable out there from the first snap, and I wish I would have done more," Simas said. "I definitely feel that it is a boost of confidence that will help me out. I got off to a slow start, but it started to pick up. That touchdown was important because it showed me there is more to come, more to come."

While West Virginia's offense looked like it could take the ball the distance on any given play, Colorado was forced to mount long drives that invariably required third-down conversions.

McKnight believes the Bufs' offense has the capability to make big plays.

Advertisement



Send flowers for any occasion

Bouquets from \$19.99^{+s/h}

ProFlowers®

Order ONLY at
proflowers.com/happy
or call 1-877-888-0688

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

"We've got playmakers that can do that," he said. "I think as we grow as a group, we're going to get that. Markques is a guy that can make long plays. We have others. We have athletes. We just need to keep improving."

"Everybody can make plays," CU sophomore tailback Rodney Stewart added. "You just have to believe in yourself and do the right things in practice."

CU's offense was without two wideouts: sophomores Jason Espinoza (thumb fracture) and Anthony Wright (ankle sprain).

Espinoza, who was able to return punts, said the late touchdown catch by Simas is a sign of things to come.

"That's what Markques always does," Espinoza said. "He was getting into his flow. He can make those plays all the time. That was a big step right there."

Big step for Simas. And, it's hoped, for the entire offense.

*Tom Kensler: 303-954-1280 or
tkensler@denverpost.com*

Advertisement

<p>don't delay</p> <p>get proven, proactive</p> <p>identity theft protection</p> <p>CALL NOW</p>	 <p>LifeLock #1 In Identity Theft Protection™</p> <p>1-888-896-1878</p>
---	---

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

sports

Broken thumb limits Espinoza

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

Posted: 10/02/2009 01:00:00 AM MDT

MORGANTOWN, W.Va. — Colorado's offense had to make do Thursday night against West Virginia without one of its leading leading receivers.

A fractured thumb prevented Jason Espinoza from catching passes, although the sophomore from Alamosa did return punts. Espinoza suffered the injury during practice this week.

Entering the game, Espinoza's 13 receptions were tied with tight end Riar Geer for second place among CU players, behind leader Scotty Mc- Knight.

"It was frustrating not being out there," Espinoza said. "It's quite different when you're on the sideline and can't help out."

Colorado opened the game in a formation with two tight ends and McKnight as the lone wide receiver. Junior college transfer Andre Simmons and true freshman Will Jefferson played on the opening possession.

Kasa plays.

CU freshman defensive end Nick Kasa, ranked as a national top-50 blue-chipper last fall at Legacy High in Broomfield, dressed for his first time as a college player and saw some playing time.

The 6-foot-7, 260-pound Kasa suffered a partially torn MCL in his left knee during an Aug. 17 pass-rush drill when an offensive lineman unintentionally rolled into him.

Scott limited.

Sophomore tailback Darrell Scott carried the ball just four times, netting 5 yards, as fellow sophomore Rodney Stewart got the bulk of the work and gained 105 yards.

CU coach Dan Hawkins said Scott had just returned to practice this week after being slowed by a bruised knee, and it was hard to get Stewart off the field because the latter was so effective.

Footnotes.

McKnight, a junior, needed only the first offensive play of the game to set a CU school record by catching a pass in his 28th consecutive game — an 8-yarder. McKnight had been tied with Charles E. Johnson, who caught passes in 27 straight games from 1991-93. . . . Thursday night's game marked the fourth different day of the week for CU in as many games. CU previously had played on a Sunday, Friday and Saturday. The remaining schedule includes a Thursday night

Advertisement



Send flowers for any occasion

Bouquets \$19.99
from ^{+s/h} 19.99

ProFlowers®

Order ONLY at
proflowers.com/happy
or call 1-877-888-0688

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

game at Oklahoma State (Nov. 19) and the annual day-after-Thanksgiving battle with Nebraska (Nov. 27). The Buffs host Nebraska this year.

Tom Kensler, The Denver Post

Advertisement

don't delay
get proven, proactive
identity theft protection
CALL NOW

 **LifeLock**
#1 In Identity Theft Protection™
1-888-896-1878

Print Powered By  **FormatDynamics™**

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

sports

CU is no charity case with loss to West Virginia

Colorado can't convert turnovers into points in a 35-24 loss

By John Henderson
The Denver Post

Posted: 10/02/2009 01:00:00 AM MDT



CU quarterback Cody Hawkins is sacked by the Mountaineers' Ovid Goulbourne for a 9-yard loss in the fourth quarter Thursday night in Morgantown, W.Va. (Jeff Gentner, The Associated Press)

MORGANTOWN, W.Va. — A Colorado program in

need of a few gifts found a virtual Welcome Wagon in the form of the West Virginia Mountaineers on Thursday night. They gave the Buffaloes a few bricks and a little plaster, just enough to build a nice foundation heading into Big 12 play.

Instead, the Buffs couldn't hammer a nail when they needed to and wound up watching another game crumble around them as West Virginia and tailback Noel Devine rolled 35-24.

The Mountaineers (3-1) have developed a rep as being more charitable than some United Nations agencies. They came in with 10 turnovers, all in the previous two games. But while Auburn thanked them for six of them in a 41-30 win, the Buffs couldn't take advantage of all that charity.

Four West Virginia lost fumbles in the first 23 minutes turned into a whopping three Colorado points, a mere footnote in the wake of Devine's career-best 220 yards. Before a national TV audience still saying "Holy Toledo!" every time they see a Colorado helmet, the 1-3 Buffs blew a realistic shot at redemption.

"Could we have won the football game? Sure," Colorado coach Dan Hawkins said. "I'll leave it at that. We didn't make enough plays to win the football game. That's one side of it. The other side of it, I was proud of the way we battled. That was our best effort, by far."

While the effort improved, the number of weapons didn't. A wide receiver other than Scotty McKnight, who had a game-high nine catches,

Advertisement




Send flowers for any occasion

Bouquets \$19.99

from ^{+s/h}

ProFlowers®




Order ONLY at
proflowers.com/happy
or call 1-877-888-0688

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

didn't make a catch until 6 1/2 minutes remained. Tailback Rodney Stewart had 105 yards rushing, but his 36-yard TD run to tie the score 7-7 was one of only two of more than 7 yards.

It was this kind of grinding that transformed those four Mountaineer fumbles into a missed field goal, a three-and-out, an interception and a 39-yard field goal.

"It's tremendously frustrating, as an athlete, as a defensive player," linebacker Marcus Burton said. "But you've got to roll with

Fumblin', bumblin'

In the first half, West Virginia fumbled on three consecutive drives, as well as fumbling after an interception, but the Buffs gained just three points. A look at what CU did with those possessions:

Where	Plays	Yards	Result
West Virginia 34	3	6	Missed FG
Colorado 15	3	5	Punt
Colorado 21	6	25	Intercept
Colorado 46	10	32	FG

the punches."

Devine, all 5-feet-8 and 176 pounds, had the knockout blows. He gave Colorado its "here we go again" moment with a 77-yard TD romp on the Mountaineers' second play. The junior from North Fort Myers (Fla.) High had spurned the likes of Alabama and Florida for West Virginia, and was way too much for a Colorado defense facing speed issues. His 56-yard run to the CU 24 set up the go-ahead touchdown in the second quarter.

"I told him afterwards I hope I never see that guy again," Dan Hawkins said. "That's why you coach. It's fun to compete against those guys."

Fun? His defense wouldn't say that. What was fun for them was watching Hawkins eschew a 46-yard field goal on fourth-and-7 and down 21-10 in the third quarter. Quarterback Cody Hawkins threw down the left sideline where McKnight outjumped cornerback Brandon Hogan for a 29-yard TD.

Kicker Aric Goodman had already gone only 1-for-3, but that wasn't the only reason Dan Hawkins threw the dice on offense.

"We need some big plays," Hawkins said. "That comes from confidence. That comes from personnel and getting into a rhythm. Yeah, we kind of knew that coming into the season, that we're going to have to be machine-like."

The only machine on this night was Devine. When the 60,055 gold-clad fans started getting nervous, ahead only 21-17 entering the fourth quarter, Devine carried nine times for 51 yards, in a 14-play, 69-yard drive that chewed up 6:48.

When freshman Ryan Clarke scored from the 1, West Virginia had a 28-17 lead with 9:17 left. And Colorado must pick itself up to continue a death march to No. 2 Texas on Oct. 10, then home against No. 18 Kansas.

But an improved effort has given Colorado an improved outlook.

Advertisement

don't delay

get proven, proactive

identity theft protection

CALL NOW



LifeLock
#1 In Identity Theft Protection™

1-888-896-1878

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

"We're going to be in good shape," said Cody Hawkins, who was 27-for-52 for 292 yards, two TDs and three interceptions. "I don't think we'll play anybody as athletic as these guys all season."

As he spoke, dying off in the distance were ironic verses blaring out from the stadium speaker. As a long season became longer, no Buff hummed along to "Take Me Home, Country Roads" by John Denver.

*John Henderson: 303-954-1299 or
jhenderson@denverpost.com*

Advertisement



Send flowers for any occasion

Bouquets \$19⁹⁹
from ^{+s/h}

ProFlowers®

Order ONLY at
proflowers.com/happy
or call 1-877-888-0688

Print Powered By  **FormatDynamics™**

All Things Colorado Sports — Blogs — The Denver Post

OCTOBER 2, 2009, 9:17 AM

Analyzing CU's loss in Morgantown

By **TOM KENSLE** |  12 Comments

Some day-after observations of Colorado's 35-24 loss at West Virginia while waiting on a flight at the Pittsburgh airport:

*** I have no problem with personnel packages. But sometimes they can become predictable. After a few offensive series by Colorado, I'd gather many of the 60,000 fans in Morgantown realized that when CU puts tailback Demetrius Sumler in the lineup, it's bound to be a pass play. Sumler is CU's best blocker in pass protection.

*** The more I see of Rodney "Speedy" Stewart the more I'm convinced that the sophomore tailback is Colorado's best offensive threat. I have no qualms about him playing ahead of Darrell Scott. Still, I have to believe that CU coaches can find a way to involve Scott in the offense, in some fashion. This team in desperate need of playmakers, and Scott reportedly ran a 10.5 100 meters in high school. Perhaps when Scott is 100-percent recovered from a knee bruise, we'll see that. But Scott keeps telling reporters in practice that he is "ready to go."

*** Right before our eyes, senior tight end Riar Geer might be developing into a NFL prospect. He has a knack for finding a crease in the defense and is an exceptional blocker.

*** Scotty McKnight would play for anybody. I'm serious. The junior wideout might not be a starter at Florida or Southern Cal, but he would get some playing time for any of the superpowers. He's Mr. Third Down – and a really tough kid.

*** CU's offensive line played its best game – and against its quickest opponent. And that was without regular center Mike Iltis, who sat out the game after suffering a concussion in practice on Sunday. Iltis said he will be ready next week for the game at Texas.

*** It's impossible to tell from the pressbox, but those missed field goals by junior Aric Goodman must be psychologically devastating for the team. Goodman has a good leg and, on the surface, at least, he appears confident. But against a quality opponent, CU can't afford three misfires. Aric is a good guy and class act, and Buffs fans should be pulling for him. But at some point, Colorado may be forced to try someone else, perhaps walk-on Ryan Aweida. I'm sure recruiting a kicker for the 2010 class has become a priority. With CU's tradition of producing All-American kickers and punters, I'd think the Buffs could – or at least should – land a good one following a national search.

*** Curtis Cunningham and Will Pericak could grow into good defensive tackles, but right now Colorado really misses George Hypolite and Brandon Nicolas. They produced a push from the middle that gave more room to CU's defensive ends and linebackers.

*** I have to say I expected CU's overall defense would be faster and more athletic than what it has shown. Perhaps that's why linebackers Jon Major and Doug Rippy are getting more playing time.

*** Count me among those that did not appreciate the play of departed linebacker Brad Jones as much as I should have.

*** Yes, junior-college transfer Andre Simmons missed most of August camp. But I thought the 6-foot-3, 210-pound wide receiver would be a contributor by now.

*** I get the feeling that sophomore wideout Markques Simas will have a big second half to the season. But the offense needs one other young wideout to make an impact. That could be Anthony Wright, who is getting a crash course in playing wide receiver after converting in August from cornerback. Wright, one of CU's fastest players, was said to have made great strides in learning his new duties until spraining an ankle in a recent practice.

*** Like most quarterbacks, Cody Hawkins draws too much blame after losses. Colorado can be successful with Cody, but not when he continually faces third-and-seven. Not unlike the Broncos' Kyle Orton, Cody needs to be more of a distributor than a playmaker. That means other skill-position players need to step up and coaches must find a way to place players in situations where they have a better chance to succeed.

*** Colorado's goal now should be to salvage a bowl bid with a 6-6 finish. That requires winning five of the last eight games. Winning the lottery might be easier than winning at Texas next week. So that likely will mean winning five of seven. It's a tall order, but not impossible. CU does get Kansas, Missouri, Texas A&M and Nebraska at home. And two of the road games are against struggling teams, Kansas State and Iowa State. As every Buff fan realizes, it would have been so much easier had CU held serve against Colorado State and Toledo.

ARTICLE PRINTED FROM ALL THINGS COLORADO SPORTS

0 tweet

<http://blogs.denverpost.com/sports/2009/10/02/analyzing-cus-loss-in-morgantown/>

Click [here](#) to print.

All contents [Copyright 2009 The Denver Post](#) or other copyright holders. All rights reserved. | [Privacy Policy](#) | This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed for any commercial purpose.

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

Bufs drop to 1-3 with loss to Mountaineers

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

Posted: 10/01/2009 09:02:01 PM MDT

Updated: 10/01/2009 10:41:29 PM MDT



West Virginia's Alric Arnett looks to break the tackle of Colorado's Jimmy Smith during the first half of an NCAA college football game Thursday, Oct. 1, 2009, in Morgantown, W.Va. (AP Photo/Jeff Gentner)

MORGANTOWN, W.VA. — A 17-point underdog, Colorado tried to make a game of it Thursday night, but ultimately could not keep up with West Virginia's explosiveness.

The hard-fought result, a 35-24 Mountaineers victory, was of no consolation to a Colorado team that was hoping to make a statement in front of a national television audience. CU (1-3) has failed to win at least two of its first four games for the third time this decade. The 2004 Buffaloes began 0-4 en route to a 3-8 record, and the 2006 team started with six consecutive losses and finished 2-10.

Things do not get easier. Up next for Colorado is an Oct. 10 road game against second-ranked Texas.

Colorado defensive coordinator Ron Collins said earlier

Extras

- [View photos from the CU vs. West Virginia game .](#)

in the week he was concerned about West Virginia's penchant for producing explosion plays. Collins' fears were realized on the Mountaineers' second play from scrimmage when junior tailback Noel Devine made a dancing, cut-back move inside the left guard and then shifted into a full stride for a 77-yard touchdown.

Devine, who finished with 220 yards on 22 carries, also set up a second-quarter TD with a 56-yard run.

"I hope I never see that guy again," CU coach Dan Hawkins said of Devine.

Advertisement

don't delay
get proven, proactive
identity theft protection
CALL NOW



LifeLock
#1 In Identity Theft Protection™
1-888-896-1878

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

Mountaineers quarterback Jarrett Brown did his part. The 6-foot-4, 223-pound senior found wide receiver Brad Starks for a 48-yard touchdown pass to take a 21-10 lead early in the third quarter.

West Virginia, which also had an open date last week, improved to 3-1.

Colorado was able to convert four first-half fumbles by West Virginia into just three points: a 39-yard field goal by Aric Goodman.

At times, it appeared that Colorado's offense was reduced to only three options: runs by tailback Rodney Stewart and passes to wide receiver Scotty McKnight and tight end Riar Geer.

McKnight was the only CU wideout to catch a pass through the first three quarters. That makes it tough to sustain a drive.

CU quarterback Cody Hawkins finishe 27-of-52 for 292 yards with two touchdowns and three interceptions. Stewart finished with 105 yards on 21 carries.

With Jason Espinoza's availability limited to returning punts for the Buffs, new wideouts Markques Simas, Andre Simmons and Will Jefferson drew more playing time. They did not catch a pass in the first half, however.

CU sophomore tailback Darrell Scott, who has been slowed by a knee bruise suffered in the second game of the season, against Toledo, carried the ball just twice in the first half.

Colorado wasted numerous opportunities to build a first-half lead. Goodman, a junior, missed field goals from 30 (wide left) and 45 yards (hit left upright) before finally making the 39-yarder.

The Buffs went up 10-7 with that Goodman field goal. But the lead didn't last long — just two minutes and 24 seconds of the play clock, to be precise.

"We had some opportunities for more points in the first half," Dan Hawkins said. "When you play a good football team, you have to maximize those opportunities. If you do that, you have a chance at a different outcome."

On the first play of the ensuing West Virginia possession, Devine started out on a sweep and then bolted upfield for 56 yards before CU cornerback Cha'pelle Brown ran him out of bounds. Four plays later, Jarrett Brown connected with Jock Sanders for a 6-yard touchdown on a right-to-left crossing pattern to give West Virginia its first lead, at 14-10 with 1:21 left in the first half.

"Even though we lost this football game, that was our best effort by far," Dan Hawkins said.

Tom Kensler: 303-954-1280 or tkensler@denverpost.com

Advertisement



Send flowers for any occasion

Bouquets \$19.99 +s/h

from **ProFlowers**

Order ONLY at proflowers.com/happy or call 1-877-888-0688

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

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

Longmont, Colorado
Friday, October 23, 2009

Publish Date: 10/2/2009

Opportunity lost for CU

*By Greg Carey
Special to the Times-Call*

MORGANTOWN, W.Va. — Colorado head coach Dan Hawkins continues to struggle away from home, but he remained relatively upbeat following Thursday's defeat because of the way his team competed.

The Buffaloes fell to 1-3 after a 35-24 loss to West Virginia at Mountaineer Field.

"That's our best effort, by far, and that's a very good football team right there," Hawkins said. "Athletically, I think those guys can match up with a lot of football teams on our schedule, and our guys are starting to figure out what it takes to compete at that level."

West Virginia running back Noel Devine gave the CU defense fits all evening on his way to a career-high 220 rushing yards — 77 coming on the Mountaineers' second play from scrimmage to put the Buffs in an early 7-0 hole.

"I told him afterwards I hope I never see that guy again," Hawkins said. "He's a tremendous competitor."

Colorado answered quickly on Rodney Stewart's 36-yard touchdown run. Stewart froze West Virginia cornerback Brandon Hogan on an inside move and dove for the pylon to get CU on the board.

Stewart finished with 105 yards on 21 carries. The touchdown was his longest run of the night.

Had the Buffaloes been able to capitalize on West Virginia's turnovers, they may have been able to come out on top.

Although CU recovered four first-half fumbles, it missed out on its chance to go ahead by several scores.

"We were a little bit disappointed just because we knew that we could have converted a couple of those opportunities and we would have been right there," quarterback Cody Hawkins said.

West Virginia quarterback Jarrett Brown lost the ball on the first play of the Mountaineers' third possession, and Buffs linebacker J.B. Beatty pounced on it. Four plays later, CU kicker Aric Goodman missed a 45-yard field goal, marking his second miss of the night.



West Virginia's Noel Devine looks to run past Colorado's Jalil Brown during the fourth quarter Thursday in Morgantown, W.Va. **Jeff Gentner/AP**

WEST VIRGINIA 35, COLORADO 24

Colorado

7 3 7 7—24

West Virginia

7 7 7 14—35

First Quarter

WVU—Devine 77 run (Bitancurt kick), 10:27.

Col—Stewart 36 run (Goodman kick), 8:36.

Second Quarter

Col—FG Goodman 39, 3:51.

The Mountaineers drove back down the field, but receiver Bradley Starks fumbled in the red zone after a reception, and Colorado defensive back Jalil Brown recovered.

West Virginia fumbled yet again on its next drive when receiver Jock Sanders coughed it up and Buffs linebacker Jeff Smart scooped the recovery.

Cody Hawkins was intercepted by West Virginia linebacker J.T. Thomas on the ensuing possession, but Thomas continued the fumbling streak on that play, and CU receiver Scotty McKnight recovered to regain Colorado possession.

That led to Goodman's lone successful field goal of the night — in four tries — from 39 yards, to put the Buffaloes ahead 10-7.

The lead would not last long, though, as Sanders rebounded from his fumble to haul in a 6-yard touchdown pass to cap a five-play drive. The drive was aided by a 56-yard scamper from Devine, and the Mountaineers led 14-10 at halftime.

West Virginia head coach Bill Stewart's team came firing out of the gates in the second half and went ahead 21-10 on a 48-yard touchdown pass from Brown to Bradley Starks less than two minutes into the half.

The Buffaloes would not go away. They elected to go for a fourth-and-7 in favor of kicking a long field goal, and the move paid off when Cody Hawkins found McKnight for a 29-yard touchdown pass to bring CU within 21-17.

Dan Hawkins said he didn't want to put Goodman in a situation to kick a long field goal. "We felt like we had a decent play offensively," he said.

Despite West Virginia safety Robert Sands intercepting Cody Hawkins later in the third, the score remained 21-17 until the fourth quarter.

Cody Hawkins' three interceptions were his only concern about the offense.

"Other than the turnovers, I thought today we were able to run the football and combine the passing game in there better than we have in the past," he said.

West Virginia put together a 14-play drive of 69 yards, and fullback Ryan Clarke cashed in with a 1-yard touchdown run to put the Mountaineers up by 11 with 9:17 remaining.

"They just went on that big, methodical drive and didn't have a lot of big plays, but were just machine-like and grounded down the clock," Dan Hawkins said.

Clarke scored again to put the Mountaineers up 35-17, before Colorado finished off the scoring with a 20-yard touchdown pass from Cody Hawkins to Markques Simas with three seconds left.

WVU—Sanders 6 pass from Brown (Bitancurt kick), 1:21.

Third Quarter

WVU—Starks 48 pass from Brown (Bitancurt kick), 13:05.

Col—McKnight 29 pass from C.Hawkins (Goodman kick), 10:02.

Fourth Quarter

WVU—R.Clarke 1 run (Bitancurt kick), 9:17.

WVU—R.Clarke 8 run (Bitancurt kick), 2:00.

Col—Simas 20 pass from C.Hawkins (Goodman kick), :03.

A—60,055.

ColWVU

First downs

21 19

Rushes-yards

30-100 42-257

Passing

292 148

Comp-Att-Int

27-54-3 12-19-0

Return Yards

12 42

Punts-Avg.

3-31.0 4-48.0

Fumbles-Lost

0-0 5-4

Penalties-Yards

5-29 5-43

Time of Possession

32:44 27:16

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING—Colorado, Stewart 21-105, Sumler 1-7, Scott 4-5, Lockridge 2-2, C.Hawkins 2-(minus 19). West Virginia, Devine 22-220, R.Clarke 5-22, Sanders 3-21, Austin 1-4, Rodgers 1-4, Team 1-(minus 2), Starks 1-(minus 5), Brown 8-(minus 7).

PASSING—Colorado, C.Hawkins 27-52-3-292, Team 0-2-0-0. West Virginia, Brown 12-19-0-148.

RECEIVING—Colorado, McKnight 9-98, Geer 8-113, Devenny 3-33, Simas 2-23, Sumler 2-19, Stewart 2-(minus 1), J.Behrens 1-7. West Virginia, Starks 3-68, Sanders 3-18, Arnett 2-28, Austin 1-9, R.Clarke 1-9, Urban 1-9, Devine 1-7.

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

Longmont, Colorado
Friday, October 23, 2009

Publish Date: 10/2/2009

CU leans on Stewart, not Scott, at RB

*By Greg Carey
Special to the Times-Call*

MORGANTOWN, W.Va. — Colorado tailback Rodney Stewart got the bulk of the carries in the Buffaloes' 35-24 defeat at West Virginia on Thursday.

Stewart rushed 21 times for 105 yards but finished with just 8 rushing yards in the second half.

Meanwhile, Darrell Scott rushed just four times for a total of 5 yards. According to CU head coach Dan Hawkins, a few factors contributed to the uneven amount of work for the two backs.

“(Rodney) was pretty effective, wasn’t he?” Hawkins said. “Darrell started practicing a little bit more this week, but you’ve got to look at the flow of the game and how that goes. Rodney was just so effective that it’s hard to get him out of the game.”

Despite not having much of an impact after halftime, Stewart was the first player to rush for more than 100 yards against West Virginia this season.

Scott has battled a bruised knee since the opening kickoff at Toledo.

SIMAS MAKES FIRST CATCH: CU wide receiver Markques Simas hauled in the first reception of his career for 3 yards to convert a third-and-2.

The highly touted sophomore then caught a 20-yard touchdown pass from Cody Hawkins with three seconds remaining.

Dan and Cody Hawkins both believe Simas is starting to come around.

“His knee is finally getting 100 percent, and he’s getting back into the rhythm of things,” Dan Hawkins said.

“We know Markques is going to be a great player for us, and unfortunately he hasn’t been involved as much as we’d like him to be, because they were clouding the boundary and he happened to be lined up over there,” Cody Hawkins said.

Simas redshirted in 2007, was academically ineligible in 2008 and was suspended for the first two games this season for breaking team rules.

DIFFERENT LOOK: Cody Hawkins admitted that West Virginia’s odd 3-3-5 defensive stack is difficult to play against because of how uncommon it is and the athletic Mountaineers’ defense.

“I thought our offensive line played great against a very athletic defense that does something not a lot of teams do with



Colorado’s Rodney Stewart rushes for a touchdown against West Virginia on Thursday in Morgantown, W.Va. **Jeff Gentner/AP**

that 3-3-5," Cody Hawkins said. "They try and get a lot of guys involved with very different looks, and they can bring blitzes from a lot of different looks."

GOODMAN STRUGGLES: Buffaloes kicker Aric Goodman struggled early and often.

Goodman missed a 40-yard field goal wide left on the game's first possession. He missed again from 45 yards later in the first quarter. After connecting on a 39-yard field goal, Goodman missed from 57 yards to finish the evening 1-for-4.

One year after kicking the game-winning field goal to defeat the Mountaineers, Goodman had a night to forget.

EXTRA POINTS: CU freshman defensive end Nick Kasa made his collegiate debut and finished with one assisted tackle. ... Cha'pelle Brown and Marcus Burton each finished with 1 1/2 sacks, giving the Buffs three for the game. West Virginia finished with two sacks. ... CU wide receiver Scotty McKnight broke a program record by catching a pass in his 28th consecutive game. He also caught his 12th career touchdown. ... Colorado's captains were linebackers Jeff Smart and Marcus Burton and tight end Riar Geer.

October 1, 2009

Noel to the rescue

Devine shines as WVU overcomes mistakes, tops Colorado 35-24

By [Dave Hickman](#)

Staff writer

MORGANTOWN -- West Virginia played its second sloppy game in a row Thursday night. This time, though, the Mountaineers had a savior.

Noel Devine has not only grown into WVU's most consistent offensive weapon, he's also become its most trustworthy.

The little tailback, seemingly one of the few Mountaineers who have mastered the art of holding onto the football, ran for 220 yards and two touchdowns and West Virginia overcame four first-half turnovers to beat Colorado 35-24.

A crowd of 60,055 -- the first sellout of the season at Mountaineer Field -- and an ESPN audience saw West Virginia run its turnover total to 10 in the last two games, but still manage to improve to 3-1. Colorado, which beat the Mountaineers in overtime a year ago in Boulder, fell to 1-3.

"I'm frustrated with the way it happened, but I'll never look a gift horse in the mouth," West Virginia coach Bill Stewart said. "I'll take a 35-24 win any day. I'm happy with the win."

And for it he has Devine to thank as much as anyone.

Yes, West Virginia's defense came up big when it had to. That's becoming more and more necessary as the offense continues to surrender the football. Those four WVU turnovers Thursday night led to just three Colorado points.

But it was Devine who made the biggest plays when they mattered the most. He had a 77-yard scoring run on the Mountaineers' second offensive play, set up another score with a 56-yard run and then, when the game was really on the line in the fourth quarter, almost single-handedly led a touchdown drive that gave West Virginia a little bit of breathing room.

With West Virginia clinging to a 21-17 lead to start the final quarter, Devine carried nine times for 52 yards during a 14-play, 69-yard scoring drive that was capped by Ryan Clarke's 1-yard run. That made the score 28-10 and all but sealed the deal.

It also came one series after quarterback Jarrett Brown had been sacked twice and sent WVU's offense reeling, forcing a fourth-and-38 punt.

That's when Stewart decided to ride the horse that got the Mountaineers their lead.

"The more the game went on, the more we put it in [Devine's] hands," Stewart said. "I got frustrated when Jarrett got sacked twice and that's all on me. I said, 'Let's just get it to [Devine].'"

That drive, in which West Virginia faced only one third down -- Devine converted it with a 5-yard run -- was completed entirely on the ground. Brown tried only one pass, which fell incomplete.

"When he plays like that," Brown said of Devine, "it makes it very difficult to stop our offense."

Brown completed 12-of-19 passes for 148 yards and two touchdowns for the Mountaineers, who had 407 yards of total offense --- 259 rushing and 148 passing.

Colorado's Cody Hawkins was a throwing machine, but for the most part West Virginia kept him

from making the really huge plays. He completed 27-of-52 passes for 292 yards and two touchdowns and was intercepted by Robert Sands, Sidney Glover and J.T. Thomas.

Colorado, which had answered every WVU score throughout the game, wasn't able to do so after that Devine-fueled drive to start the fourth quarter. After failing to get to Hawkins the entire game, Ovid Goulbourne sacked the quarterback to force a fourth-and-19 at the WVU 39 with six minutes to go. When Aric Goodman missed a 57-yard field goal, the issue was pretty much decided.

The teams did trade meaningless touchdowns late. Clarke scored his second of the game with two minutes to play on an 8-yard run after Colorado turned it over on downs deep in its own end of the field. The Buffaloes got their own consolation score when Hawkins threw a 20-yard TD pass to Markques Simas with three seconds to play.

Leading just 14-10 at halftime, West Virginia wasted no time to start the second half, going 75 yards in just five plays to score and take a 21-10 lead. The touchdown was a short pass from Brown to Bradley Starks on the right side. Starks simply ran around the cornerback covering him and raced untouched 48 yards down the sideline for the touchdown.

But just as it happened in the first half, Colorado immediately answered a quick WVU score when Scotty McKnight beat Brandon Hogan one-on-one deep on a fourth-and-7 play, scoring on the 29-yard pass from Hawkins to pull back to within 21-17 less than three minutes later.

West Virginia began the game like it had a chance to run away and hide when Devine opened things up with the 77-yard run and the Mountaineers led 7-0 after having the ball just 18 seconds.

Things got a lot harder after that, though, in part because of Colorado's ability to move the ball with Hawkins and tailback Rodney Stewart (21 carries, 105 yards) and in part because of West Virginia's turnovers. The Mountaineers lost two scoring chances with fumbles deep in Colorado territory by Starks and Jock Sanders, and lost a scoring chance and continued a Buffaloes drive when Thomas intercepted a pass and then fumbled it back near midfield.

Colorado answered Devine's opening touchdown in short order, driving 59 yards in just six plays to score on Stewart's 36-yard run and make it 7-7.

The Buffaloes blew two scoring chances when Goodman -- who made the winning field goal in overtime against WVU in Boulder last year -- missed a 40-yarder wide left on the opening drive and then hit the left upright on a 45-yard attempt later in the quarter.

Goodman did give Colorado a temporary lead, though, when he made a 39-yard field goal with 3:51 remaining before halftime at the end of that Colorado possession kept alive by Thomas' fumble.

But Devine answered quickly again, ripping off a 56-yard gain on the next play to put the ball at the Colorado 24. Four plays later, Brown hit Sanders on a short post in traffic for a 6-yard score and a 14-10 halftime lead.

Reach Dave Hickman at 304-348-1734 or dphickm...@aol.com.

- [Traffic](#)
- [Stocks](#)
- [Newstip](#)
- [iPhone](#)

You are here: [Home](#) / [SPORTS](#) / [Colleges](#) / [College football](#) / [CU](#) / Colorado plays better but can't finish against West Virginia

Colorado plays better but can't finish against West Virginia

By [Kyle Clark](#) on October 1, 2009 · [Comment](#) ·  [Email This](#) · [ShareThis](#)



West Virginia's Noel Devine heads toward the end zone for a touchdown in the first quarter Thursday night against Colorado.

MORGANTOWN, W.Va. — Colorado continued a losing streak on the road that dates to 2007, falling to West Virginia 35-24 Thursday evening. The Buffs played closer than expected, but failure to capitalize on several chances cost them the edge needed to pull ahead.

There were the four fumbles by West Virginia in the first half, which resulted in a total of three points for CU. Their resulting possessions after each went like this: missed field goal, punt, interception, field goal. Top that off with the fact that the fourth fumble was by a defensive back trying to run back a Cody Hawkins pick and there could have been no points at all off the turnovers.

Then there were those missed field goals, three of them. Kicker Aric Goodman drove one wide after a promising opening drive gave him a chance from 40 yards out. Goodman then missed another from 45 yards, bouncing it off the left upright. His final miss came late in the game, when Colorado was down 28-17. From 57 yards, Goodman's line-drive looked long enough but was off target.

All together, CU left enough points on the field to have pulled off an upset. Down only 14-10 at halftime, the Buffs easily could have been up a score or two. It has to be frustrating for a team that showed continued improvement in some trouble areas.

The offensive line overcame early issues with the WVU pass rush and kept Hawkins off his back until the fourth quarter. A key play for the line came on fourth and 7, midway through the third quarter. Hawkins had plenty of time to connect with Scotty McKnight for a 29-yard touchdown that kept CU in the game. The group also provided enough cushion for running back Rodney Stewart to gain 105 yards on 21 carries, along with a touchdown.

The defense had a good showing against the pass, keeping Mountaineers quarterback Jarrett Brown accurate yet quiet. CU held him to 148 yards on 19 attempts. Some of this came from increasing pressure on Brown as the game progressed, as the Buffs had three big sacks for a total of minus 44 yards.

Unfortunately, West Virginia didn't really need those passing yards. Running back Noel Devine lived up to the cliché and had a career day. Just as coach Bill Stewart wanted, his back got more carries, toting it 22 times. Devine made the most of each one, running for 220 yards, which beat his previous best of 208. A majority of those gains came from that classic Colorado killer: big plays. Devine ran for a 77-yard touchdown on his team's second offensive play, along with a 56-yard run late in the opening half to set up a WVU lead.

In the end, the frustration of the first half and noticeable speed difference between the teams wore down Colorado. West Virginia pounded the ball for nearly seven minutes on a scoring drive during the fourth quarter, making it 28-17 late. They then secured the dagger after Colorado turned it over on downs at its own 15 with three minutes to go.

Colorado did show a final glimpse of a consistent offense, executing the two-minute drill for a touchdown pass, to pull back within 11 points during the ending moments of the game. Although it wasn't enough to get the win, it was enough to keep the game from being another nationally televised embarrassment.

RECORDS AND FIRSTS FOR RECEIVING CORPS

*On the first play of the game, Scotty McKnight set a Colorado record for consecutive games with a catch. His streak now sits at 28.

*Highly touted receiver Markques Simas saw more game action and recorded his first career catch along with his first receiving touchdown.

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.

Related posts:

1
tweet

retweet

1. [Buffs change QBs, but Shipley and Longhorns roll](#)
2. [Colorado pitches shutout in Folsom, 24-0](#)
3. [West Virginia's offensive machine awaits CU tonight](#)



Comments are closed.

PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE-REVIEW

Devine's monster game leads WVU past Colorado

By Tony Dobies
FOR THE TRIBUNE-REVIEW
Friday, October 2, 2009

MORGANTOWN, W.Va. -- West Virginia running back Noel Devine rushed for a career-high 220 yards and one touchdown to lead the Mountaineers to a 35-24 victory over Colorado Thursday night.

Devine's rushing total was the most since he rushed for 207 yards last year against Auburn. It's his second-career 200-yard rushing game and the 10th 100-yard rushing game of his career.

"He showed me character," said WVU coach Bill Stewart. "He showed grit, he quit that cut-back stuff and lowered his shoulder and punished the tackler."

The 22 carries were the most for him this season. Prior to the game, he had averaged 17 carries per game.

"I just ran," Devine said, "just like I normally did."

Devine's lone touchdown came in the first quarter, a 77-yard score. He ripped off the touchdown off the left side of the offensive line, as a hole opened up between left tackle Donnie Barclay and left guard Josh Jenkins.

"I don't know how he saw that hole," said running back Ryan Clarke. "He's a rare breed. He's a beast."

The victory was not without trouble for West Virginia, though, as the Mountaineers had turnover issues once again. After turning the ball over six times in a loss to Auburn nearly two weeks ago, the Mountaineers fumbled the ball four times in the first half against Colorado.

"Interceptions are a decision, but fumbles are just a kid making a mistake," said WVU offensive coordinator Jeff Mullen. "I really believe no one teaches taking care of the ball better than our staff, but we need to continue to press upon that point."

But, West Virginia was able to weather the first-half troubles, as the Mountaineers did not turn the ball over in the second half.

In addition, West Virginia's defense was able to force three turnovers itself. Colorado quarterback Cody Hawkins threw three interceptions. Linebacker J.T. Thomas, safety Sidney Glover and safety Robert Sands caught the picks.

Down 7-0 early, Colorado came right back, though, and on its next possession, running back Rodney Stewart scored a 33-yard touchdown run off the right end. He juked past WVU corner Brandon Hogan and beat corner Keith Tandy to the pylon for the touchdown to tie the game.

WVU's offense took the lead with less than two minutes remaining in the first half. After a 56-yard run from Devine, Brown found Sanders on two consecutive plays, the second a 6-yard touchdown pass to give West Virginia the lead back, 14-10.

The Mountaineers started the second half similar to how they started the game, with a touchdown.

Brown found Starks on a quick pass, and he beat a defender and streaked down the sideline for the 48-yard score to take a 21-10 lead.

Colorado came right back on its next possession, when Hawkins connected with receiver Scotty McKnight on a 29-yard touchdown to keep Colorado within one score at 21-17.

WVU fullback Ryan Clarke ran in a 2-yard touchdown to give West Virginia a two-score advantage, 28-17.

Colorado tried a 57-yard field goal with just over six minutes to go in the game, which was wide left, sealing the West Virginia victory.

Clarke added another touchdown with two minutes to go, the third of his career.

Hawkins found receiver Markques Simas for a touchdown with three seconds to go to finish the scoring.

Brown finished 12 of 19 for 148 yards and two touchdowns.

Stewart was held to 6 yards in the second half by the West Virginia defense. He finished with 105 yards on 21 carries.

Hawkins was 27 for 52 for 292 yards and two touchdowns.

Images and text copyright © 2009 by The Tribune-Review Publishing Co.
Reproduction or reuse prohibited without written consent from Trib Total Media



WVU gets some revenge

By Dave Morrison

Sports Editor

October 02, 2009 12:29 am

— MORGANTOWN — It wasn't a thing of aesthetic beauty. In fact, it was ugly. But West Virginia will no doubt take its 35-24 win over Colorado Thursday night at Milan Puskar Stadium.

On a scale of 1 to 10, this one might have been a four. Which would be fitting, since that matched the Mountaineers' turnover total.

Noel Devine rushed for a career-high 220 yards, including an 77-yard touchdown run on the Mountaineers' first possession of the game, to lead what was an up-and-down offensive night.

Jarrett Brown finished the night 12-of-18 for 148 yards and two scores. He wasn't intercepted, but he was sacked three times.

It wasn't the punchout many expected, given last year's 17-14 Colorado win and the fact the game was in Morgantown.

Of course, a lot of that was self-inflicted.

West Virginia had four costly first-half fumbles.

Brown, who was picked off four times and fumbled once in the Mountaineers' 41-30 loss at Auburn, fumbled at his own 33 without being hit. But the Mountaineers dodged a bullet when Colorado kicker Aric Goodman missed a 45-yard field goal.

Then, with WVU driving deep in Colorado territory, Brown found Bradley Starks at the Buffs' 15, but he coughed the ball up there.

WVU moved into Colorado territory again in the second quarter, only to watch leading receiver Jock Sanders fumble.

Then, WVU's J.T. Thomas spit up the ball after he had intercepted Cody Hawkins.

That led to a field goal that actually gave Colorado a short-lived lead.

All that, and WVU still somehow led at the half.

Starks and Sanders both atoned for their mistakes with touchdown receptions from Brown.

Sanders' 6-yard catch in the second quarter gave WVU the lead back and Starks scored on a 48-yard pitch and catch on the Mountaineers' first possession of the second half.

Colorado (1-3) didn't go away quickly as Hawkins hit Scotty McKnight on a 29-yard touchdown on fourth-and-7 after Starks' touchdown reception.

The Mountaineers eventually put the game out of reach late when redshirt freshman fullback Ryan Clarke scored two touchdowns.

Colorado scored with three seconds left to make it an 11-point game.

With Colorado still in the game, trailing 28-17, Ovid Goulbourne came up with a 10-yard sack that pushed the ball back to the 40. Colorado coach Dan Hawkins elected to go for a 57-yard field goal that would make it a one-possession game.

But Goodman's kick was short and to the left.

West Virginia had made the score 28-17 with its best drive of the night, going 56 yards on 12 plays and finishing off with a 1-yard run by Clarke. A lot of that yardage came on the legs of Devine, who had two 11-yard runs to keep the drive rolling.

The Mountaineers somehow led 14-10 at the half, despite the turnovers and with the help of a couple missed Buffalo field goals.

They quickly added to that when Brown found Starks in single coverage on the Mountaineers' first

possession of the second half and the former quarterback blew by his man and scored easily to give the Mountaineers a 21-10 lead.

The first-half giveaways gave West Virginia a grand total of 10 turnovers since the beginning of the Auburn game, a span of six quarters.

After Colorado missed a 40-yard field goal on its first possession, West Virginia struck. Following a play where Brown just overthrew a wide-open Alric Arnett, Devine broke free and raced 77 yards for a touchdown at the 10:27 mark of the first quarter.

But Colorado fired back with Rodney Stewart, who torched the WVU defense for a 36-yard run and snuck inside the pylon to tie the score at 7-7.

Colorado had little trouble moving the ball the first half, but was hurt by a pair of missed field goals.

West Virginia is at Syracuse Oct. 10 for its Big East opener.

— E-mail:

demorrison@register-herald.com

Copyright © 1999-2008 cnhi, inc.

Photos



West Virginia's Noel Devine, right, gets away from Colorado's Anthony Perkins during the second quarter of their game Thursday night in Morgantown. The Mountaineers won 35-24. The Register-Herald