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# Colorado coach Dan Hawkins not fretting after Buffaloes stumble to 0-2 start

**By: PAT GRAHAM**

**Associated Press**

**09/15/09 7:10 PM PDT**

BOULDER, COLO. — Dan Hawkins remarked in the offseason that Colorado had the talent to be a 10-win team.

After losses to rival Colorado State and underdog Toledo to open the year, that hunch is coming back to haunt the Buffaloes coach.

Is Hawkins now on the hot seat?

"I'm as frustrated and disappointed as anybody," Colorado athletic director Mike Bohn said Tuesday. "I believe in Dan."

Just a year ago, Bohn signed Hawkins to an extension to keep him in Boulder through the 2012 season. The move came on the heels of a 2007 campaign in which the Buffaloes beat Oklahoma and Nebraska and earned a spot in the Independence Bowl.

But the Buffaloes couldn't sustain the momentum, finishing 5-7 last season. So far in 2009, they have been outscored 77-55 by two opponents from outside the major BCS conferences.

He is 13-26 in his third season at CU after being lured from Boise State to Boulder to right a program that had been stunted by scandal under Gary Barnett.

Hawkins isn't fretting or fearful of losing his job.

"I'm always secure," said Hawkins, who took over the program in 2006. "We're doing things right by the kids, we're doing things right by the school, we're doing things right football-wise, too."

Bohn has been backing Hawkins at every chance. But he also understands the concern of the fans. Bohn is quite aware that Buffs fans are restless.

"It's the nature of the business. I'd prefer not to have all those negative thoughts channeled into a

negative direction," Bohn said. "He's frustrated and he understands that he's responsible for what's going on. He's looking at the mirror and trying to figure out new ways to present his program and put new things in. I salute that competitive spirit."

That's what led Hawkins to suggest the team was capable of winning 10 games before the season. Despite the early season slide, he still thinks the talent is in place.

"Are we good enough? Yeah, we are," said Hawkins, whose team will wear throwback jerseys from the 1930s — the days of Byron "Whizzer" White — when they host Wyoming (1-1) on Saturday. "We're good enough. But that also gets both fueled and tainted by confidence and momentum. ... We just need to keep going, get a little bit better, get a win, get a little wind underneath our wings."

That also could go a long way in soothing Buffs nation.

"I don't feel under attack, but I also understand we're not meeting the expectations of our fans," Bohn said. "We're not providing a sense of accomplishment at a level we expect ourselves. The outside attacks are really not driving us as much as our competitive spirit. We're competitive people and we have a great resolve to improve."

The Buffaloes got on track offensively in the second half at Toledo, scoring 35 points in the 54-38 loss. But the contest at that point was all but out of reach.

Late in the game, quarterback Cody Hawkins, the coach's son, was dinged up on a collision near the end zone. He fell in for the score, but was left feeling groggy.

Dan Hawkins said Cody is feeling better. Although, the hit to the head did give the dad side of him quite a scare.

"My father mode always pops up for every guy," Dan Hawkins said. "If you watch the tape — and this is every quarterback — they get blasted a lot. That's just the nature of their position."

The Buffaloes are trying to keep the redshirt year of Tyler Hansen intact. Last season, they stripped it from him midway through the year as he ended up platooning with Cody Hawkins.

Asked if he could envision such a scenario this season, Dan Hawkins simply said, "We'll see how that goes."

One of Colorado's main concerns is shoring up a defense that's been shaky so far, especially in the secondary. Colorado State's Grant Stucker and Toledo's Aaron Opelt have thrown for a combined 527 yards and five touchdowns.

That's why the Buffaloes are going back to the basics, cutting down on schemes and packages.

"What we're trying to do, to some degree, is make it so doggone perfect and so doggone exact that sometimes you overdo it by a hair," Hawkins said. "You get tied into knots a little bit, of trying to do too much."

As for the emotions of the team, Buffaloes linebacker B.J. Beatty said they're sticking together.

"Everybody's keeping themselves up," Beatty said. "We're trying to move on to the next game, get us a

win and get past these last two losses — get motivation and get this 10 wins going."

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## Hawkins to stay course

CU coach not worried about his job security despite 0-2 start

By **Kyle Ringo** Camera Sports Writer  
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 09/16/2009 12:05:13 AM MDT



Colorado football coach Dan Hawkins isn't in panic mode, but he understands why many of the fans who support his program are.

The Buffs started the season 0-2 with ugly losses to Colorado State and Toledo and have gone just 13-26 during his tenure. Hawkins is in his fourth year in Boulder and said on more than one occasion in the offseason that his team is capable of winning 10 games this fall. The Buffs haven't played anywhere near the level needed to produce those results, which has led to calls for Hawkins to be fired.

In presidential terms, his approval rating is at an all-time low.

Hawkins said no one hurts more after a CU loss than him and he's working hard to get problems corrected, but he's not worried about his job security.

"I'm always secure," he said. "Whether you approve of me or disapprove of me really doesn't affect my self-esteem. It really doesn't."

"I know this. My boss is sitting over here and we're doing things right by the kids. We're doing things right by the school, and we're doing things right football-wise. We're doing things the way you're supposed to do them. I know that."

Athletic director Mike Bohn said it's too early in the season to pass judgment on the team and its coaches and much too early to consider making a coaching change. Bohn hasn't ruled out the possibility that a change might have to be made if improvement doesn't come.

Hawkins believes improvement is very real possibility.

He referred to past CU teams who started seasons with losses and went on to bowl games as evidence that the season can be salvaged. He pointed to the 2007 New York Giants, who started the year 0-2 with heavy pressure on coach Tom Coughlin. The Giants won the Super Bowl.

"There are a ton of those stories out there, but nobody likes those stories," he said. "Nobody recounts those stories. Nobody publishes those stories because nobody likes those stories. That doesn't create conflagration. That doesn't get the juices flowing.

"Those stories are out there, but everyone wants to live in the world of drama and hype and all that."

Hawkins said Tuesday during his weekly media luncheon the Buffs will simplify things on defense this week in an effort to get back on track. There are no big adjustments planned offensively. His son, Cody, remains the starting quarterback and sophomore receiver Markques Simas is expected to play his first game after two redshirt seasons and a two-game suspension to start the year.

Hawkins said he doesn't believe bigger changes are needed at this point and he's not about to reinvent himself or his program. He said he relies on nearly 30 years of coaching experience telling him he is on the right track.

"You do what you believe in," he said. "And you hang in there and you keep plugging away. In the end, the thing cracks. It cracks for everybody.

Both Buffs' losses have been televised nationally and both sets of announcers wondered whether Colorado has enough team speed and athleticism in key positions. Hawkins said there are still some holes on the roster where those are legitimate issues, but he believes the team is capable of competing and winning with the talent on hand.

Hawkins said he does worry about what fans of the program think. He said the program values its fans and needs their support. At the same time, he said he worries most about only what he can control.

"They want us to win," he said. "I want us to win. They see us gashed on defense. They see us not run the football. I understand all that stuff. I do."

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## Woelk: Panic button still untouched by Buffaloes

By Neill Woelk Camera Sports Writer  
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 09/16/2009 12:06:13 AM MDT

Despite evidence to the contrary -- and heaven knows there's plenty of evidence -- it's hard to believe the Colorado Buffaloes are as bad as their first two games would suggest.

Not that anyone is attempting to sugarcoat the results. A defense that's given up 1,000 yards and an offense that has started far too slowly two weeks in a row has resulted in two of the more embarrassing defeats in Buff history. The losses have been there for the world to see, and the world has taken notice.

Earlier this week, Blair Kerkhoff of the Kansas City Star wrote, "The glass case is off the panic button" at Colorado.

Last week, Lee Barfknecht of the Omaha World-Herald noted, "After Colorado State beat the Buffaloes 23-17 on Sunday, it appears CU would have to play 30 times this season to get to 10 wins."

Meanwhile, a vocal -- and significant -- segment of Buff fans are itching for a coaching change (which isn't going to happen).

And through it all, Dan Hawkins remains steadfast in his belief that the Buffs will be OK.

"Are we good enough? Yes, we are good enough, but that also gets both fueled and tainted by confidence and momentum and all that," CU's coach said at his regular Tuesday press conference. "We just need to build a little confidence and get a little momentum and turn the page a little bit and those things will go.

"I've been on both sides of that deal before. ... We just need to keep going, get a little better, get a win and get a little wind underneath our wings."

Theories as to why the Buffs have started so slowly are as plentiful as the points they've allowed.

One former player told me Hawkins' offense isn't geared to the team's talent. Another said the fault lies with the defense, that it has been deteriorating over the last couple of years and the worst is still ahead.

And yet another ex-Buff insists the troubles can all be traced to Hawkins' lack of motivational skills.

Maybe some or all of that is true, but fact is, it's still Hawkins' team, and he still has time to change the direction. With 10 games remaining on the schedule, there's ostensibly still enough time to make this season memorable for something other than being the one every Buff fan wishes he could forget.

Still, if misery loves company, the Buffs are not alone.

Folks at Michigan State are less than pleased with a loss to Central Michigan. Oklahoma State fans -- who had dreams of a national title dancing in their heads -- are now shaking their heads after getting run over by Houston.

And you can bet Kansas State boosters aren't exactly happy over a Bill Snyder team losing to Louisiana-Lafayette -- in the same week that Snyder received a contract extension that will pay him roughly \$1.9 million per year.

A large percentage of CU faithful, meanwhile, are perplexed by Hawkins' reaction.

Folks who have been expecting -- or wanting -- a fire-and-brimstone rant session from the coach have been disappointed. The coach who refused to jump up and thump his chest after beating Oklahoma a couple of years ago now refuses to paint an end-of-the-world scenario after two losses.

And, fans who think Hawkins should promise immediate and wholesale changes are instead hearing CU's coach insist that

staying the course is the best way to proceed.

I can't even hazard a guess as to which reaction would be better.

But you can put me in the minority -- granted, it's a very small minority -- of people who don't believe this season is a complete loss yet. No doubt, given the way the Buffs have played to this point, it's hard to imagine much success coming down the pike. But there's still enough talent on this team to at least be competitive for the majority of the games remaining.

Tuesday afternoon, Hawkins continued to say he's convinced the Buffs are doing the right things. He's convinced that the process will produce success.

We won't say he's wrong. Hawkins has been successful wherever he's been, and it's hard to discount a history of achievement. More often than not, a man's past is a decent barometer of his future.

But we also know the clock is ticking. Just two games into the season, CU's margin for error between a complete flop and anything resembling success has become razor thin.

Now, it's time for the Buffs and their coaches to prove they know the difference between the two.



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# WR Simas anxious to finally suit up

**By Kyle Ringo** Camera Sports Writer  
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 09/16/2009 12:06:57 AM MDT

Markques Simas sure has looked good in practice for more than two years now. Colorado football fans might finally get to see him catching passes from Cody Hawkins on Saturday at Folsom Field.

If the talented sophomore wide receiver waits any longer to get on the field, the team might be wearing throwback uniforms to the time when he was recruited out of the San Diego area in 2006. As it is, Simas is slated to make his debut against the Wyoming Cowboys in uniforms designed like those the Buffs wore in the 1930s.

Simas can live with the gold jerseys, silver helmets and silver pants CU officials unveiled Tuesday. At this point, following a redshirt year, a season spent academically ineligible and being suspended from the first two games this year for violating team rules, he might be willing to play in polka-dots.

"There are no more surprises," Simas said. "There is no more, 'Hey, why ain't that dude out there?' I'm going to be suited up ready to go on Saturday."

Head coach Dan Hawkins wasn't so sure when asked about Simas' status at his weekly press conference. Simas has been nursing a sprained MCL in his right knee in recent weeks. Hawkins simply said "we'll see" when asked if the third-year sophomore would finally get into a game after watching the first 27 games of his CU career on the sidelines or on television.

Simas said he has been practicing and doesn't believe his knee is a significant issue at this point. It probably would have kept him out of the first two games had he not been suspended. He's confident and eager to play and said he believes he can be a difference maker for an offense that needs more speed and athleticism on the perimeter and someone to help it get off to faster starts. It's something he is capable of at 6-foot-2 and 215 pounds.

"I feel like I'm going to be that guy for the wide receivers," Simas said. "It's going to enable us to start a little bit faster as well. We've kind of been starting slow on offense and all we need is one player to step up and bring that spark."

Hawkins has taken over coaching wide receivers this fall, but offensive coordinator Eric Kiesau coached Simas for two years through the end of spring ball in April. He said Simas' greatest asset is his hands.

Hawkins has tried to keep Simas involved in the film room and on the practice field during preparation for the first two games this season even though he was suspended until now. Simas said he believes the offense will now be able to do more than it was capable of in those outings because he and Scotty McKnight and Jason Espinoza can all be on the field at one time. McKnight and Espinoza combined to catch 19 passes for 223 yards at Toledo last week.

It's been a long wait to play football again. Simas said he has never been a guy who lived and died with the game. He has many other interests that occupy his time and his mind, but in recent months, his desire to get back on the field and prove himself has grown stronger.

"I guess my last snap was in '06," he said. "So I've been anticipating it for awhile and it's been rough. I think I'm going to make up for it this season. That's what I've been planning. That's what I've been dreaming. I've already played the Wyoming game about 10 times in my head."

## Legacy Day

Colorado is honoring the distant past in its program on Saturday by wearing throwback uniforms to the 1930s era, when players such as Byron "Whizzer" White and Kayo Lam led the nation in rushing and became the first two All-Americans in CU history.

In addition to the uniforms, the field will be painted with designs of the era, especially in the end zones. The field will also be have a mark noting the 150th anniversary of the City of Boulder.



Officials plan to honor CU track and field and cross country star Jenny Barringer at halftime. Barringer will be presented with the Honda Track and Field Athlete of the Year award.

**Notable**

Hawkins said he expects linebacker Shaun Mohler to play this week after missing the Toledo game because of a concussion suffered against Colorado State. ... Hawkins said he does not see a huge difference between the two quarterbacks Wyoming has been playing this season. ... Running back Darrell Scott is listed on this week's injury report with a sore knee. He is probable. Fellow running back Rodney Stewart also is probable as he continues to try to get over a hamstring issue he has been fighting since early in fall camp.

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## CU coach Hawkins feeling the hot seat

By Tom Kensler and John Henderson  
The Denver Post

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Updated: 09/17/2009 12:53:09 PM MDT



Colorado coach Dan Hawkins is 13-26 in his four years at the helm. A weak showing vs. Toledo is not helping his image. (John Leyba, The Denver Post)

**BOULDER** — After an embarrassing loss at Toledo, Colorado football players knew they would have a hostile greeting when they returned home, but maybe they didn't know the extent of it.

They do now.

"I have this geology class," senior linebacker and captain Marcus Burton said Tuesday, "and the professor's like, 'You people may think this class is boring. We're just talking about rocks. But it's no more boring than both the CU games. Marcus, you're a captain. Can you tell us about that?'"

"He calls me out on the floor. I wanted to leave, but I didn't. I'm in the class to learn. I'm not there to talk about football."

Unfortunately for Burton and the 0-2 Buffaloes, that's the main thing college football

### Extras

- View a slide show of photos of Hawkins' career at CU .

fans around the state want to talk about. What's wrong with the Buffaloes?

Fourth-year coach Dan Hawkins, 13-26, is showing up on national coaching "hot seat" lists after opening with losses to Colorado State and Toledo, games most CU fans had chalked up as victories before the season. Saturday, Colorado hosts a Wyoming team no doubt brimming with confidence after leading Texas late in the first half last week. Then the meat of CU's schedule arrives, with a trip to West Virginia followed by Big 12 opponents.

CU was favored in its first two games but fell

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behind early and never recovered. The Buffs couldn't stop the pass, or the run, and didn't show much firepower on offense until falling far behind in the 54-38 loss to Toledo last Friday.

There's much to be done — in a hurry. Team captains have called for a players-only meeting this week. And Hawkins said Tuesday the defense will be simplified for Saturday's game.

"You get tied up in knots a little bit with trying to do too much," Hawkins said.

## Restless fans, supporters

Colorado athletic director Mike Bohn would not say how many boosters and supporters have contacted him since Friday night's loss. But, yes, Bohn has heard from some. It's probably a number growing by the day.

Some want Hawkins fired. (Bohn has strongly defended his coach.) Others are in full support of Coach Hawk, despite the shocking start.

"The feedback demonstrated from our fan base runs the whole gamut of emotions," Bohn said Tuesday. "The good news is, so many are passionate. Obviously, the challenge is to steer the scope of all the comments in the right direction."

Bohn acknowledged that solidarity is a challenge under trying circumstances.

Jeff Piehl, a 1994 CU graduate, made the trip for the Toledo road game and came away so

disgusted with the outcome that he said he likely will give up his Buff Club seats (club level seating on the east side of Folsom Field) for 2010. Club-level seating requires a \$3,000 donation to the athletic program, in addition to the price of tickets.

"Barring a miraculous finish to this year, I'll buy season tickets next year but will not be in club level," Piehl said. "From a big-picture perspective, I haven't seen progress made under Hawkins, except for (victories against) Oklahoma (2007) and West Virginia (2008).

"But that's two games. It seems that for every step forward, it's two or three steps backward."

Another Buff Club member, 1995 CU graduate Rob McDaniel, said what's hard for him to understand is the disparity between the preseason expectations, when Hawkins talked to boosters of a 10-win season, and what he is seeing on the field.

"It's shocking," said McDaniel, who plans to travel for the game at West Virginia. "We heard, '10 wins, no excuses.' I'm a pragmatic person, so I didn't think 10 wins was possible. But I thought 7-5, maybe 8-4. I don't know where the disconnect is. I certainly hope the coaches on the inside have a better handle on it.

"I'm not on the fire Dan Hawkins bandwagon. . . . But I would like to know why reality hasn't matched expectations."

Meanwhile, [firehawkins.net](http://firehawkins.net), a new website,

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was launched recently as a sounding board for irate CU fans.

University spokesman Bronson Hilliard said CU chancellor Phil DiStefano is declining comment on any questions pertaining to the football program or Hawkins.

"It's not appropriate," Hilliard said. "We're two games into the season. It's much too early to make any evaluation."

Steve Bosley, chairman of the CU board of regents, said any discussion concerning the state of the football program would be premature.

"That's not on the radar screen to discuss. I don't want to deal in speculation," Bosley said. "I like Dan Hawkins, like his style. I hope he is successful."

## Can Buffs recover?

CU's overall lack of talent and numbers among juniors and seniors can be traced to mediocre recruiting classes in 2005, which was the final group signed by Gary Barnett, and in 2006, when Hawkins had only six weeks to salvage a recruiting class after taking the job Dec. 16, 2005.

All coaches make recruiting mistakes. But glaring has been CU's inability to sign a four-star quarterback and failing to sign game-breaking wide receivers. Only one wideout, Chance Blackmon, was signed in the 2008 recruiting class, and he has departed.

On the positive side, Hawkins has signed several national blue-chippers, including offensive lineman Ryan Miller (2007), tailback Darrell Scott (2008), linebacker Jon Major (2008), offensive lineman Bryce Givens (2008) and defensive end Nick Kasa (2009).

Hawkins was asked Tuesday if he has enough talent on the roster to succeed.

"Are we good enough? Yeah, we are. We're good enough," Hawkins said. "That also gets both fueled and tainted by confidence and momentum. We just need to build a little confidence. And get a little momentum. Turn the page, a little bit. And then those things will go."

Toledo broke free for 11 plays of 20 yards or more, including four of 40 yards or longer. That was Toledo, not Texas.

Hawkins said observations that Colorado lacks top-flight speed at the wide receiver position are valid. But he believes the defensive secondary is faster and more athletic than it looks "when you get 'gashed' " by long gains.

"I don't think we're that far off," Hawkins said.

Neither does junior linebacker B.J. Beatty, who said: "There's a little frustration. The team has worked really hard. It gets you down a little bit, but knowing how good we are, we will turn this around. We just have to get the win Saturday and be positive."

Bohn said observers should take into

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consideration that CU has a youthful roster that has the potential to improve.

"It just hasn't jelled with this group yet on a consistent basis," Bohn said. "I'm certainly optimistic. It starts Saturday against Wyoming. It's important for us to come out as a program to show what we're about and what we stand for."

*Tom Kensler: 303-954-1280 or tkensler@denverpost.com John Henderson: 303-954-1299 or jhenderson@denverpost.com*

## Cost to replace Hawk near \$3.4 million

BOULDER — It would likely cost Colorado well over \$3 million to make a change in head football coaches this year, CU athletic director Mike Bohn confirmed to The Denver Post on Tuesday.

Before answering a question about costs associated with a coaching change, Bohn made it clear that he fully supports coach Dan Hawkins and expects Hawkins will build a successful program at CU.

"To be honest with you, we haven't even begun to look at all (the potential costs)," Bohn said. "But if that happened, you would have to figure in relocation costs and so many other things with new coaches and new staff. That's not something we're focused on at this point, however."

Last October, Hawkins received a two-year contract extension through the 2012 season. The new contract eliminated a clause in Hawkins'

original five-year contract that limited CU's liability to \$850,000 per year.

If Hawkins were to be terminated after this season, his current contract would allow him to recover the three-year income totals from his base salary (\$518,773 for 2010-12); income from radio, TV and other appearances (\$1,729,572); summer camp revenues (\$173,965); and supplemental income from sponsorship support (\$704,902). That adds up to \$3,127,212.

Additionally, if Hawkins were to be fired before Jan. 31, 2010, he would receive a prorated amount from this year's compensation package.

Additional expenses, including relocation costs and the cost of hiring a new coach, probably would increase the final tally to about \$3.4 million, Bohn said.

*Tom Kensler, The Denver Post*

*This article has been corrected in this online archive. Originally, Steve Bosley, chairman of the CU board of regents, was listed as Steve Ludwig.*

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college football

## Colorado's short week tradeoff for exposure, money

By Tom Kensler and  
John Henderson  
*The Denver Post*  
Posted: 09/16/2009 01:00:00 AM MDT

**BOULDER** — Athletic director Mike Bohn said Tuesday the exposure and TV money warranted Colorado playing Colorado State on a Sunday night then traveling to Toledo for a Friday game.

"Was it ideal? No," Bohn said. "But it's obviously water under the bridge at this point. Again, I believe that the national exposure is important not only to the institution but to the program in recruiting and trying to keep our alumni base engaged."

Bohn said he heard numerous watch parties of up to 250 people watched the game from Chicago, New York and Los Angeles. Both the CSU and Toledo games earned the athletic department \$400,000. The Thursday game at West Virginia (Oct. 1) will earn the program another \$400,000.

Hawkins only had three days to prepare for

Toledo then flew on Thursday.

"It's not an excuse," Hawkins said. "It's the tradeoff for: A, money and the exposure. The TV revenue for our department is big."

Long awaited. Markques Simas will finally get on the field. The Colorado sophomore receiver said Tuesday he will make his debut Saturday at home against Wyoming.

He is in his third year on campus but has not played in a game after being highly recruited out of San Diego in 2007. After redshirting as a freshman, he was academically ineligible last season. Simas was suspended for the first two games this season for breaking a team rule during the offseason.

Simas sustained a sprained MCL in his right knee during the August drills but said today, "I'm going to be out there."

Uniform change. For Saturday's game against Wyoming, the Buffs will wear 1930s throwback uniforms. The jerseys will be gold with black numbers along with silver pants.

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Longmont, Colorado  
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## Hounded Hawkins

Colorado coach, 'under attack,' remains resilient

*By Patrick Ridgell*  
© 2009 Longmont Times-Call

BOULDER — Just how much havoc is unfolding within the Colorado athletic department and, more specifically, its football program, depends on whom you ask.

“Clearly we’re under attack,” athletic director Mike Bohn said Tuesday.

“I always feel secure,” a calm coach Dan Hawkins said Tuesday.

What’s clear is that as the team prepares for Saturday’s game against Wyoming (1:30 p.m., FCSC) in search of its first win after two bad losses to start 2009, there is discontent.

Hawkins, 13-26 entering his 40th game at CU, said all is well within his program, which he said continues to do things the right way. Indications from outside of it suggest what Hawkins is doing is not enough to please its fans.

There’s an online petition intended for Bohn with signatures advocating Hawkins’ dismissal. There’s the web site “firehawkins.net.” On the other hand, the site “FireDanHawkins.com” has been set up with a preemptive message that on Tuesday read: “This site is being held to prevent someone with negative intentions from obtaining it.”

According to one booster who spoke with the Times-Call on the condition of anonymity, “It seems like there’s talent on the team, but the coaching doesn’t seem to be there.”

But the attack to which Bohn referred is from fans, many of whom are voicing discontent over the program’s struggles directly to his office. Others, Bohn said, are pledging support. The response his department hears are varied.

“Our fans are anxious, and it runs the full gamut, from unequivocal support of Dan and the team to, ‘make a change tomorrow,’” Bohn said. “I think that’s the biggest challenge for us is trying to keep all of our fans and students and people that care about the program on the same page.”

Bohn was surprised last year when Kansas State fired Ron Prince just a few months after extending the football coach’s contract. On Sept. 29, 2008, Hawkins signed an extension through Jan. 31, 2013.

“Nothing shocks me in this business, and nothing is guaranteed,” Bohn said. “I will say that, again, every institution has different responses to different issues. But again, I believe in Dan and I believe in our kids.

“Again, nothing is guaranteed. But we’re committed to doing everything we can to be successful.”

To buy Hawkins out of his new deal could cost more than \$3 million. According to the extension he signed last September, Hawkins is entitled to his base salary, plus the supplemental salaries from his radio, television and public appearances, plus his sponsorship support.



Colorado head coach Dan Hawkins coaches from the sidelines against Toledo on Friday in Toledo, Ohio. The Buffaloes lost 54-38, and, after two losses to start the season, Colorado’s athletic department is receiving some pressure from fans to make changes to its football program. **J.D. Pooley/AP**

On Aug. 31, Bohn said season tickets were down four percent from 2008, but still selling. CU increased season ticket costs last winter.

CU reported Tuesday 7,500 tickets remain for Saturday, and a crowd between 48,000 and 50,000 is expected. There were 53,168 at the Colorado State game, just shy of the capacity, 53,750.

The department is still trying to finalize fund raising efforts on a practice facility it wants to build for basketball and volleyball. Bohn said in July its cost will be between \$10.8 and \$11 million.

Meanwhile, Hawkins spent much of Tuesday's luncheon discussing his program's plight.

"Whether you approve of me or disapprove of me really doesn't affect my self-esteem," Hawkins told reporters. "It really doesn't."

"I know this — my boss (Bohn) is sitting over there, and we're doing things right by the kids, we're doing things right by the school, we're doing things right football-wise, too. You guys are not in the bowels of our football program every day. You don't see all the little things that go on. You don't understand all of that. That's OK. I understand part of that."

"But we're doing things the way you're supposed to do them. I know that. As a football team, in the weight room, in academics, discipline-wise, in the structure of who we are and where we are right now at the University of Colorado, I have 100 percent confidence in that."

Hawkins said Tuesday he and his staff will simplify the defense this week before the Buffs face Wyoming, which runs a spread offense similar to Toledo. The Rockets torched CU for 624 yards Friday. The Buffs have allowed 1,000 yards in two games, and the meat of their schedule — games with West Virginia, Texas, Kansas and Missouri — awaits.

Hawkins said personnel changes are not coming. Quarterback Cody Hawkins, who took a brutal hit to the helmet Friday, is listed as Saturday's starter.

Dan Hawkins said CU has the talent to win, but added confidence and momentum are important. He said he hears the fans' cries, but don't expect him to make drastic changes.

"Do I worry about what they think?" Hawkins said. "Sure, I worry about what they think. We want our fans, because we need support. We have to have people fill up the stands. We didn't sell out against Colorado State. I would like to see us sell out every single game. I would like to see our season ticket base grow, like to see our fans grow and see them fired up. I understand why they're disappointed and all of that."

"You do the things you believe in. You do the things close to 30 years of experience have taught you, and you keep hammering away at that. That doesn't mean you don't tweak some thing. But you don't just scrap 30 years of successful experience and say, 'Well, let's do it a different way.'"

Meanwhile, the players say they're ignoring the fervor.

"It doesn't affect the players," safety Anthony Perkins said. "It's funny to see that happening."

"Our team, our coaches, we're all we got at the end of the day. And we're going to take care of our business, and hopefully the fans are there."

Asked what was funny about the situation, Perkins pointed to speculation in the media about the coach's future, which he said contrasts what was being written just a couple of weeks ago.

"Everybody was just talking about how great everything is," Perkins said.

"That just kind of shows just kind of fan support in general. I think when you're winning they're going to love you; when you're losing the world is going to end. I think we just need to stay focused on what we're doing and not worry about that at all."



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## Buffs plan to simplify defense against Wyo.

By Patrick Ridgell  
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BOULDER — Change is coming to the Colorado defense.

The unit that has allowed 1,000 yards to Colorado State and Toledo is about to become simpler. That's according to coaches and players, who Tuesday went about trying to prepare for Saturday's game against Wyoming (1:30 p.m., FCSC).

"I think it's just a question of trying to put too much in and you're trying to do such a good job of getting guys in the exact right spot based on formation, down and distance, field position, that maybe you overdo it a little bit and it becomes paralysis by analysis to some degree," coach Dan Hawkins said Tuesday.

"The other thing is ... you have to fight that urge because what happens is it becomes cyclical. The more you press, the more you press. The more you relax, the more you relax. It's that old psychological thing. You have to find that balance in there."

Defensive coordinator Ron Collins said a simpler scheme means CU is going back to base coverages and won't rotate as many defenders. Toledo's fast-paced offense caused CU confusion during Friday's 54-38 loss. Collins said he expects Wyoming's offense to use a similar pace. He expects fewer substitutions will reduce confusion.

Collins also said those who do play Saturday will have to earn the time.

"The guys that are proving themselves out here on the field, than they're the ones that are going to be on the field," Collins said.

Linebacker B.J. Beatty said the defenses CU used Friday prompted confusion because the personnel varied so much.

"We were running back and forth," Beatty said.

"Now the coaches are trying to put it on one group and keep it simple."

**SIMAS' PLANS:** Receiver Markques Simas, who sprained the MCL in his right knee two weeks ago, said Tuesday the knee is "good" and he will play Saturday.

Simas, a talented receiver, is a third-year sophomore who has yet to appear in a CU game. He redshirted in 2007, was academically ineligible in 2008, and was suspended for the first two games of 2009 for breaking team rules.

"It'll be a breath of fresh air just because I've been sitting on the sideline, saying I could be doing this for them," Simas said. "It's going to feel real good to get out there and beat somebody for a touchdown. Don't know who it might be. Somebody better come very prepared to play."



Colorado quarterback Cody Hawkins, right, jumps on the ball while Toledo's Dan Molls moves in during their game Friday in Toledo, Ohio. CU has listed Hawkins as probable for Saturday against Wyoming. **J.D. Pooley/AP**

INJURY NEWS: CU listed quarterback Cody Hawkins as probable for Saturday with a concussion.

Linebacker Shaun Mohler suffered a concussion against Colorado State and was not cleared to play against Toledo. He's listed as day-to-day.

Running backs Darrell Scott (knee bruise) and Rodney Stewart (hamstring) are probable.

There's still no announcement on surgical plans for defensive end Nick Kasa, who suffered an MCL tear Aug. 17. Kasa is out as he continues to rehabilitate the knee.

EXTRA POINTS: CU will wear special uniforms for Saturday, which is Legacy Day. The Buffs will wear gold jerseys with black numbers, along with silver pants, like what they wore in the 1930s. The field will also be reminiscent of how it appeared 50 years ago in the lettering and the end zone design. ... Kicker Aric Goodman, a transfer from Wyoming, will get a chance to kick against his former team Saturday. Dan Hawkins said he's sure Goodman will enjoy a win, but, "I think he'd be just as happy with a win over Toledo or Colorado State. I don't buy into that's the theory, that you're waiting for some sort of revenge factor." Goodman declined to comment Tuesday, saying nothing good could come from commenting about the upcoming game.

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September 15, 2009

## Big 12 football: Ten wins for Buffaloes? Umm, never mind

BY RANDY PETERSON  
REGISTER STAFF WRITER

Colorado football fans loved it when coach Dan Hawkins proclaimed 2009 to be a "10-win" season while addressing a public banquet last December.

It's what every booster — and returning player — loves to hear, a coach brimming with confidence.

Uhhh, something happened en route to 10 wins. Something like Colorado State in the season-opener, and then something like, Holy Toledo, last Friday.

"Big mistake," said Dave Lapham, television analyst on Big 12 Conference television games. "He's backpedaling like a defensive back about that statement."

"Honestly, I think your team likes to hear that kind of thing, but I don't think you go public with it."

The Buffaloes can still win 10 regular season games — if they defeat Wyoming, West Virginia, Texas, Kansas, Kansas State, Missouri, Texas A&M, Iowa State, Oklahoma State, and Nebraska.

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How did Bill Snyder celebrate signing his new contract as Kansas State's football coach?

With a 17-15 loss against Louisiana-Lafayette, that's how.

The Wildcats lost on a 48-yard field goal with 32 seconds left.

"Coach Snyder is one of the true legends of college football," Kansas State athletic director John Currie said in a statement announcing the contract worth nearly \$10 million through the 2013 season.

Snyder, 69, "retired" in 2005 after coaching Kansas State for 17 seasons. He was rehired last November.

"If he's around all five years, he's got an amazing amount of energy and enthusiasm for the game," Lapham said, "because that's not an easy thing for a guy that age."

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BAYLOR: The Bears can start a season at 2-0 for the first time since 2005 with a win against Connecticut.

NEBRASKA: 14 different players caught passes in Saturday's 29-point win against Arkansas State.

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