

It's official: Tyler Hansen to be starting QB for CU Buffs

Coach Jon Embree also says five players not coming back to program this fall

By Kyle Ringo Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

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Colorado coach Jon Embree named senior quarterback Tyler Hansen his starter for the 2011 season today, and also announced the departure of five players -- two whose careers will end because of injuries and three others who are not being invited back to the program.

Embree said offensive lineman Max Tuioti-Mariner and wide receiver Will Jefferson have knee injuries that will prevent them from finishing their careers in Boulder.

Tight ends Harold Mobley and Henley Griffon, along with defensive end Forrest West, are the players not being invited back.

Embree did not elaborate on why the three players won't be back but he offered clues in a post-practice interview last week when he forewarned that he would be making cuts after spring ball -- that the players who would be trimmed from the roster would be those who were not taking care of their responsibilities on and off the field.

"We will work with them to see if we can place them elsewhere," Embree said in a news release from the school.

Embree was not available for interviews because he is traveling this afternoon to California to meet with alumni and boosters.

Mobley and Griffon are redshirt freshmen who did not play in their first season in Boulder last fall.

West is a junior-to-be who was a regular contributor to the defense in 2010.

For Hansen, being named the starter at this point in the year is a first.

He has played in each of the past three seasons and earned the starting job for the first time last August by beating out former Buff Cody Hawkins for the job.

This year he will have the entire summer to work with teammates and lead summer throwing sessions with his teammates knowing he will be their leader in the fall.

"Tyler did a great job all spring," Embree said in the news release. "He has command of everything you need to have at quarterback and has also developed into a team leader. This was a goal of his heading into the spring and I'm happy that he was able to attain that goal."

Hansen completed 39 of 53 passes for 531 yards and five touchdowns in the three main spring scrimmages. He did not throw an interception. He also ran four times for 37 yards.

During the first three years of his career he has made a name for himself by making plays with his feet, and the offense CU used in the first half of last season was geared toward allowing him some freedom to do more of that.

But his junior season ended when he was hit hard on an option play in the Texas Tech game and he suffered a ruptured spleen.

Hansen said he was completely healthy when spring practices started and predicted he would quickly adapt to the new pro style West Coast offense coaches installed.

He said it was similar to the offense he directed in high school and his experience to this point in college would also help.

He backed up that prediction with a solid performance in spring practices, aside from some minor bumps early on.

During the second scrimmage of spring, he completed 18 of 19 passes for 246 yards and three scores. It was at that point when it became clear he had earned the job.

"I thought that he grew a lot faster with the offense than I had anticipated," quarterbacks coach Rip Scherer said in the same news release. "He had a solid performance for the most part starting from day one through day 15 in spring practice, and he really gives us a chance at quarterback.

Coaches said they were also happy with the continued development of redshirt freshman Nick Hirschman, who led five of seven scoring drives in the spring game.

Hirschman completed 22 of 43 passes for 274 yards and three scores in the three main spring scrimmages. Junior transfer Brent Burnette will be the third string quarterback heading into fall camp.

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Embree sends five CU players packing, names Hansen starting QB

By John Henderson
The Denver Post

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Defensive end Forrest West, left, pressures quarterback Tyler Hansen during spring drills. That was West's specialty at CU. He led the team with 5 1/2 sacks in 2010 despite starting only one game. He and four other Buffs were asked to leave the program. (Andy Cross, The Denver Post)

On a day when Colorado's starting quarterback was named after spring practice for the first time in six years, two key members of last year's team were asked to leave the program.

Tuesday's christening of returning starter Tyler Hansen at quarterback has been obvious since the end of the 2010 season. However, he'll be without one deep threat, and the defense will miss its sack leader.

First-year coach Jon Embree told junior receiver Will Jefferson, junior defensive end Forrest West and three others they will not be part of the program. Last week, Embree said a number of players have not shown a commitment.

Leading up to Saturday's spring game, Embree said, "If they can't play and are not doing what they're supposed to do academically and they're not doing some other things and buying into the program, they won't be here."

Jefferson caught 14 passes for 177 yards and a touchdown. Filling in at tailback at midseason he rushed 23 times for 137 yards. West started only one game but led the 5-7 Buffaloes with 5 1/2 sacks among his 19 tackles.

Also asked to leave were senior guard Max Tuioti-Mariner and redshirt freshman tight ends Henley Griffon and Harold Mobley, a cousin of former Bronco John Mobley.

In a statement, Embree said, "We will work with them to see if we can place them elsewhere."

The one player who had to return is Hansen, who could have earned a most valuable player honor from spring practice. He had very little competition, with redshirt freshman Nick Hirschman and junior college transfer Brent

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Burnette struggling much of the spring, and Hansen was sharp the entire month.

Hansen doesn't have to worry about his status this summer after battling Cody Hawkins the past two falls.

"Now that it's official, I can get to real work and organize these 7-on-7 sessions in the summer," Hansen said by phone. "Keep getting guys going."

Hansen was never the biggest of Colorado's problems last year. He hit 122-of-164 passes (.683) for 1,102 yards, six touchdowns and six interceptions in seven games. He missed the last five games with a ruptured spleen.

The overall offense, however, struggled. Colorado finished 10th in the Big 12 in offense (359.7 yards per game) and ninth in scoring (24.2 points per game). Now Hansen loses his All-America left tackle in Nate Solder and the school's all-time leading receiver in Scotty McKnight.

A lot of Embree's success will depend on Hansen.

"The biggest thing I could work on is move the ball on offense," Hansen said. "Too many times, we killed ourselves with penalties. As a quarterback, you have to take that on your own shoulders."

Now all Hansen has to do is appease fans who felt Dan Hawkins' recruitment of his son prevented Colorado from landing a four- or five-star quarterback.

"I feel I just have to prove something to myself," Hansen said. "My biggest goal is to finish healthy and play all 13 games. If I do that, I'll quell the doubters."

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Tuesday, April 12, 2011

QB Hansen the man for Colorado

By Ted Miller

It was clear throughout spring practices that [Tyler Hansen](#) was Colorado's best quarterback, so it comes as no surprise that the senior was named the starter Tuesday.

"Tyler did a great job all spring," new coach Jon Embree said in a statement. "He has command of everything you need to have at quarterback and has also developed into a team leader. This was a goal of his heading into the spring and I'm happy that he was able to attain that goal."

Hansen was the starter for most of 2009 and 2010 until he ruptured his spleen in the seventh game last fall, though his competition with [Cody Hawkins](#), former coach Dan Hawkins' son, often made headlines.

Colorado also announced that five players will not be returning to the team this fall.

Two won't be back for medical reasons: senior offensive guard Max Tuioti-Mariner and junior receiver [Will Jefferson](#). Both have knee problems.

Junior defensive end Forrest West and redshirt freshmen tight ends [Henley Griffon](#) and [Harold Mobley](#) will also not return. Embree did not elaborate in the news release on the details other than to say that, "They won't be invited back to be part of the program in the fall. We will work with them to see if we can place them elsewhere."

Embree talked about cutting players during spring practice. Consider this following through.

Hansen, named the team's top senior following spring practices, had a passer rating of 188.9 in the three main spring scrimmages, according to the school. He completed nearly 74 percent of his passes for 531 yards and five touchdowns with no interceptions.

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"I'm looking forward to getting into more of a leadership role in the summer, getting even more familiar with the playbook, organizing the seven-on-seven sessions, and concentrating on our first and foremost goal to beat Hawai'i [CU's season opener on Sept. 3 in Honolulu]," Hansen said. "I feel like I am playing smarter, I'm making better decisions, knowing when to throw the ball away instead of taking a sack, where to go with the ball based on coverages and knowing when to pull the ball down and run."



Tyler Hansen will be Colorado's starter for the 2011 season.

The 6-1, 210-pound three-year letterman from Murietta, Calif., completed 112 of 164 passes for 1,102 yards, with six touchdowns and six interceptions and a 129.5 rating in 2010. Hansen's 2,822 career yards rank 11th all-time at Colorado.

Hansen was competing with redshirt freshman [Nick Hirschman](#), who will be the backup. Hirschman completed 22 of 43 passes for 274 yards and three scores in the three scrums, a rating of 127.7; he also did not throw an interception.

"I thought that [Hansen] grew a lot faster with the offense than I had anticipated," quarterbacks coach Rip Scherer said. "He had a solid performance for the most part starting from day one through day 15 in spring practice, and he really gives us a chance at quarterback."

"I'm also really pleased with the depth at the position with Nick (Hirschman)," Scherer added. "He's improved steadily throughout the spring and finished on a positive note. I expect him to keep pushing Tyler, which is exactly what we as coaches want to see."
