



Freshman safety Terrel Smith is quickly making a name for himself with his speed and aggressive play.
Photo Courtesy: CUBuffs.com



08/16/2010 B.G. Brooks, Contributing Editor

Brooks: Meet The Streak That Chased Down 'B-Lock'

BOULDER - Of the team-high 10 tackles he made in last week's first scrimmage of fall camp, here's the one that might have opened the book a bit wider on Colorado freshman Terrel Smith:

Junior tailback Brian Lockridge catches a short pass and begins accelerating toward the east sideline where his teammates and coaches are watching. Keep this in mind: "B-Lock" can motor; catching him from behind might be as rare as a cheetah being run down. Yet after a 6- or 7-yard gain, Lockridge is on the ground - and immediately looking over his shoulder.

"Yeah, I looked back and said, 'You kidding me?'" Lockridge recalled. "When he saw me bust out, he took the right angle. I'm used to outrunning guys, but I wasn't surprised it was him.

"If anybody was going to catch me, it would be him. He's a fast kid and his knowledge of the game . . . well, he's picking it up pretty fast."

How fast? A safety from Paterson, New Jersey (Passaic County Tech), Smith already was working with the No. 2 defense - backing up starter Ray Polk - after only a couple of whistles had blown in camp's opening week.

It didn't take him long to impress new secondary coach Ashley Ambrose. Despite Smith's size - he's a shade under 5-foot-10 and at 185 pounds is 10 heavier than in high school - when Ambrose hit the "PLAY" button to watch Smith's highlight tape he saw something special.

"The minute I saw his film, I knew he was a guy who was going to play hard, be physical . . . and that's all you ask," Ambrose said. "He's the kind of guy you want on the field . . . we'll see how things go (for the rest of camp), but he's going to be hard to redshirt."

Smith sees the value in taking a first season to learn, further condition himself and eventually be a fifth-year senior. "I'll know more and play better then," he said. "But, yeah, I really want to play."

Smith also played tailback in high school, with numerous Division I-AA outfits back east eyeing him for offensive and defensive duty. He drew looks from Boston College and Pittsburgh as a corner, and eyes widened when coaches watched him on defense. High school coach John Iurato said as a safety, Smith is "ferocious . . . he hits like a truck" - and Iurato didn't say a mid-sized truck. "He does the things that need to be done in the middle of the field."

Smith acknowledges that he's likely to be in a learning mode for awhile at this level and currently is making his name known through his diligence and aggressive play. Right away, Ambrose saw Smith's ferocity and familiarity with the game, but also recognized his unfamiliarity with terminology.

"That's what he's trying to figure out now," Ambrose said. "In high school you don't do as much coverage-wise. Now, it gets a little complicated. But he'll pick it up. He's still in the process of learning it and he's doing an awesome job."

"In the scrimmage, he played his butt off. He led the team in tackles (four of his 10 were unassisted). He was everywhere, he flew around, he had a big hit . . . all I say is when this kid sees what we're doing and understands it, the sky's the limit."

When I asked Smith what he believes he brings to the party, he answered, "Toughness and being physical . . . I just like the contact and hitting people, that's really what I do. And I like trying to be a quarterback on the field. I love being around the ball and making hits, making plays."

When Smith *really* understands his role in Ambrose's defense, Lockridge projected the "Passaic Predator" will "turn into one of those guys you need to know where he's at at all times. He's a big hitter; he doesn't mind putting his head down and hitting someone - which is good when you play that safety position. And with his speed, he can recover. He's one guy you're going to have to look out for."

"Actions definitely speak louder than words with him . . . In a couple of years he's going to be a great player if he keeps going the way he's going."

When Smith touched down in Boulder earlier this summer, he had two goals: Get as familiar with the defensive playbook as he could before camp opened and put on at least 10 pounds. Strength and conditioning coach Jeff Pitman's now-famous calorie-packed (1,200) shakes and stringent weight lifting helped him with the poundage. And a strict, no-nonsense head-in-the-playbook approach at least got him acquainted with what Ambrose sought in defensive sets.

"Everything to him, he's serious about it . . . you go in the locker room, some guys might be playing video games, some guys listening to music, some guys on their phones. But he's got his book open; I'm not the only one who sees that," Ambrose said.

"He has something with him and you don't even have to get on the field to see it. I've only seen him smile twice - once at dinner and once when I offered him a scholarship. That's the only two times."

That might be an embellishment; he appeared to smile at least once (maybe I asked a stupid question) during our interview after a practice last week. But the kid *can* be eerily serious. When we talked about him running down Lockridge in the scrimmage, he almost seemed incensed at the suggestion that it was too rare to happen again.

"That's not a rare thing for me - that's what I do," he said, not smiling. "I know I'm fast; I use it to my advantage. I caught 'B-Lock' and wasn't surprised at all that I caught him. I'm fast enough to catch people, fast enough to catch fast people. It's football and I've been playing since I was young. It just carries over now to catching and tackling somebody."

He recalls his best 40-yard dash time as being 4.45 seconds. But that was in high school, and if he can't offer an update

he can offer this explanation: "Maybe I've gotten faster since 'Pit' has been working with me and my legs have gotten stronger . . . I don't know what my time is now, but I'm faster on the field. You never run straight away, like in a 40, on the field. I'm faster on the field than in my 40 time."

Ambrose agreed: "When you get on the field, he is rolling and faster than the other guy who's supposed to be the fastest. He's a football speed guy; that's just what he does. He gets to the ball and has some tenacity about what he does. That's what I love about him."

It's early, but at this point, what's not to love? Smith has the same affection for Boulder: "This place is beautiful."

The start of a beautiful relationship? Sure looks like it thus far.

Contact: BG.Brooks@Colorado.EDU

SHOW MENU



Sum greater than its parts on Buffs' special teams

Riddle`s 2009 CU unit was strong as team, but struggled in individual areas

By Kyle Ringo Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 08/15/2010 11:41:06 PM MDT

In the words of Colorado special teams coach Kent Riddle, some of his units last year were "terrible" and "really bad."

Riddle isn't going to get much of an argument from Buffs fans or reporters who witnessed the carnage during a 3-9 season. But there is also sometimes a tendency to highlight the negative during a disappointing season such as 2009 in Boulder, and the fact is, the Buffs were pretty darn good on several special teams units.

Riddle`s challenge this season is to fix what`s obviously broken while improving what his players did well.

"I think on the stuff where the bulk of the team could control the outcome, I think we did pretty well," Riddle said. "I think on some of the things where one individual has a huge impact and really that is going to be your result, we didn't do so well."

Colorado was among the nation`s best at returning and covering kickoffs. CU ranked 21st in the nation in kickoff returns with former running back Darrel Scott and current running back Brian Lockridge handling much of the workload. The Buffs allowed just 20 yards per kickoff return.

Those are the units that worked together and flourished and coaches believe those teams have a chance to be even better this fall because of an overall increase in talent, experience and depth across the roster.

"We've got guys playing in the twos who have played before, who have started on those groups," said coach Dan Hawkins, who spends a lot of time working with special teams units alongside Riddle in practices. "So you know they're going to know what to do."

Place-kicking, punting and punt return units all struggled because of inconsistency from the primary players involved. Aric Goodman and former punter Matt DiLallo didn't kick well and no one was particularly effective returning punts.

"That has been our primary focus in those areas is to create competition in those areas and have options and drastically improve," Riddle said.

Kickers remain a bit of awild card three weeks from the start of the season. No one knows yet who will be handling the place-kicking duties and how that player will handle the pressure. Redshirt freshman Zach Grossnickle will do the punting, but he is a mystery as well because he hasn't performed in a college game yet and certainly hasn't done anything under the pressure he will face on Saturdays.

The one area where improvement should come is at punt return where it appears Travon Patterson, a wide receiver transfer from USC, has the job all but sewn up.

"I would say this, just watching Travon, he would have been the guy forever because he`s so natural at catching the punt and he`s so explosive," Riddle said.

Ohio State game

spurs excitement

Colorado running back Rodney Stewart was held out of the game during last season`s trip to Toledo in his home state of Ohio because of an injury and didn't get to play in front of dozens of family members and friends.

Stewart, the Buffs starting tailback, was one of the most excited players in the CU locker room over the weekend when he heard the news the team will likely make a return trip to Ohio next year during his senior season, only this time to play

against Ohio State.

"I think it's a blessing," Stewart said. "I always dreamed about playing for them when I was little. So to actually have a chance to play against them would be great. I want to do something amazing in that game."

Stewart came to Boulder two years ago from Westerville, Ohio, and is one of three players on the roster from the Buckeye state. Linebacker Doug Rippy and cornerback Deji Olatoye also were recruited from Ohio.

Stewart said all three of the Buffs were happy to hear the news and received plenty of texts and phone calls about it over the weekend. Colorado and Ohio State are negotiating the details of the contest, but whether it actually happens depends on a variety of other factors that also have to be resolved.

Colorado is hoping to begin play in the Pac-12 Conference next year and will have to juggle its non-conference schedule because the current version includes a game against Cal, which will be a conference foe at that point. CU also plays Colorado State in Denver and Fresno State at home and would likely need to have five Pac-10 home games to fulfill its promise to fans to have six true home games every year.

However, Colorado will open next season at Hawaii, and doing so allows the Buffs to play 13 regular season games if they choose to do so.

Notable

Riddle confirmed tight end Clark Evans has left the program. Riddle said he doesn't believe Evans left the program solely because of his position change from quarterback to tight end. "I certainly think that had something to do with it, but I don't think that was the majority factor," he said. ... Hawkins said he believes the Buffs are further along at this point in fall camp than they have been at the same point in previous camps in his tenure. "I think we're quite a ways further than before," he said. ... Hawkins said he expects sixth year tight end Luke Walters to have a role in the offense. Hawkins said he has been worried about Walters' health and durability in the past after the tight end underwent two major lower leg surgeries, but he is no longer worried those issues.

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colorado football

Buff's' Bakhtiari battling to start on O-line

By **Anthony Cotton**
The Denver Post

Posted: 08/16/2010 01:00:00 AM MDT

BOULDER — Not too long ago, the University of Colorado coaching staff found itself looking at some tape of its offensive line from a couple of years back. And the difference from then to the Buffs' situation so far this year, coach Dan Hawkins said, can't be measured on a calendar.

"You're going, 'Whoa!' It's unbelievable," Hawkins said Sunday evening after his team's practice. "It's like light years."

Instead of scrambling to find enough bodies to line up from tackle to tackle, CU is suddenly flush along the O-line, and nowhere is that more apparent than at right tackle, where Bryce Givens, a sophomore and returning starter from a year ago, is being pushed by redshirt freshman David Bakhtiari.

"And I'm not

sure that Jack Harris (a 6-foot-5, 290-pound

freshman from Chaparral High School in Parker) hasn't played as well as anybody in there," Hawkins said.

Colorado Football

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"That's a good thing; as long as they continue to handle it and push each other, that's an awesome thing. And it's across the board, from catch/drop charts for the receivers and quarterback efficiency — it's on it every day and every play matters, and I think that helps everybody get better."

For his part, Bakhtiari realizes he's come a long way in a relatively short period of time.

"I knew I did really well in the spring game, and I've been working hard, just grinding," he said. "And I've gotten a lot stronger. I wouldn't say I'm 100 percent shocked, and it's not totally out of

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THE DENVER POST

the blue, but it's still a little surprising."

The native of Burlingame, Calif., certainly has the genes to succeed. One brother, Eric, plays for the NFL's Tennessee Titans; another, Andrew, is a junior at the University of San Diego. And at 6-4, Bakhtiari certainly had the right frame. The question was whether he'd be able to fill it out.

When he initially reported to CU, Bakhtiari weighed about 245 pounds. He's now up to 290, thanks to some intense work in the weight room and a never-ending supply of Gatorade/protein shakes from the Buffs' strength and conditioning coach, Jeff Pittman.

"You come in and you're 18, 19 years old and you have to get a little maturity on you," offensive line coach Denver Johnson said. "He's made tremendous strides in that way. He's athletic, he's quick, aggressive and physical, and right now we have a heck of a battle going on at that right tackle spot."

But as much as he would like to win it, Bakhtiari said the most important thing is that the team comes out on top.

"I'm going to do everything I can to keep it, but really, it's whatever's best for the team," he said. "I want to see the team succeed before I succeed."

"If that means I need to be playing, great. If it means only going in for certain downs, or not playing at all, then fine — whatever helps the

team."

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All Things Colorado Sports — Blogs — The Denver Post

AUGUST 16, 2010, 10:49 AM

CU freshman DT Dakota Poole ribbed for Canadian roots

By **TOM KENSLE** |  No Comments

BOULDER — I asked CU true-freshman defensive tackle [Dakota Poole](#)^[1], the 6-foot-5, 250-pounder from Kelowna, British Columbia, if anybody on the team is teasing him about being Canadian?

“Anybody? How about EVERYBODY,” the late signee said, with a smile.

“There’s a whole lot of ‘ehs’ and ‘What are you talking a-boot?’ he added. “There’s a lot that.

“But I try to mix up their accents too.”

By the way, Poole has shown good athleticism and coaches like his potential and tenacity. He’s raw, however, having grown up playing more rugby than football, and I’d guess is probably is ticketed for a redshirt.

I asked Poole if there is a story about why his parents gave him the first name of Dakota. Poole said he had no idea but perhaps the fact that he is part Native North American might have something to do with it, he guessed.

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All Things Colorado Sports — Blogs — The Denver Post

AUGUST 16, 2010, 9:28 AM

Ohio State AD confirms possible 2011 game vs. CU

By **TOM KENSLE** |  1 Comment

Over the weekend, the [Columbus Dispatch](#)^[1] newspaper wrote it has received confirmation from [Ohio State](#)^[2] athletic director [Gene Smith](#)^[3] that his office is negotiating with Colorado for a 2011 football game between the Buffaloes and Buckeyes.

The game would be played in Ohio Stadium.

“We are trying to finalize a game for 2011,” Smith told the Dispatch. “We hope to have an announcement on that within the next month.”

CU and [Ohio State](#)^[2] have not played each other in football since 1986, a 13-10 [Ohio State](#)^[2] victory in Columbus.

I’m not sure this has anything to do with the interest or negotiations but CU Chancellor [Phil DiStefano](#)^[4] holds bachelor’s and doctorate degrees from [Ohio State](#)^[2] and came to CU in 1974 from his alma mater, where he taught humanities education.

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AUGUST 16, 2010, 7:01 AM

CU preview: Newcomers add explosiveness to receiving corps

By TOM KENSLEER |  No Comments

[1]

Colorado senior wide receiver Scott McKnight leads a deep and talented crew in Boulder.

In the fourth part of a series of look-aheads at Colorado's 2010 season, broken down by units, we look at the Buffs' wide receivers and tight ends ...

Newcomers: Recruiting disappointments at wide receiver have plagued coach [Dan Hawkins](#) ^[2], but luck has been on his side lately in finding receivers in other ways. Michigan transfer [Toney Clemons](#) ^[3] (6-2, 210) was recently voted preseason [Big 12](#) ^[4] newcomer of the year by the league's media. Kyle Cefalo (5-10, 175), a former baseball player at Oregon State, also looked good last year in practice. Then, presto, freshman Paul Richardson (6-1, 175) joined the team earlier this month after being released from his UCLA scholarship following an off-the-field incident. And days later, former Southern Cal wideout [Travon Patterson](#) ^[5] got cleared to be a Buff for his final season of college ball.

Seemingly overnight, CU's wideout corps became one of the [Big 12](#) ^[4]'s most potent groups, including senior standout [Scotty McKnight](#) ^[6]. As for the tight ends, there are also fresh faces, including redshirt-freshman DaVaughn Thornton from Denver East and three true freshmen. Thornton (6-4, 225) is perhaps CU's most athletic tight end since All-American Daniel Graham and was a star of the spring game. Former Chatfield athlete Kyle Slavin is among the trio of true freshmen.

Biggest losses: Junior wide receiver [Markques Simas](#) ^[7] became arguably CU's best player during the final month of the 2009 season. But he left the program in the spring after being suspended for yet another off-the-field problem. The departures of senior tight ends Riar Geer (36 catches and four TDs

in 2009) and Patrick Devenny (13, three TDs) left a big void in experience at that position. Their leadership also will be missed.

Strengths: In addition to the newcomers, sophomore Will Jefferson looks to be vastly improved and led everybody in Thursday's scrimmage with seven catches. Junior [Kendrick Celestine](#)^[8] is back after a year's hiatus to his native Louisiana, and senior Andre Simmons, a former four-star recruit, will try to show that he isn't a bust. Hawkins said redshirt freshman Jarrod Darden also is, well, catching on. As if a genie appeared, the wideout group amazingly has transformed in one year from one of the thinnest in the [Big 12](#)^[4] to one of the deepest. At tight end, junior [Ryan Deehan](#)^[9] has had plenty of reps.

Weaknesses: Most of the newcomers worked with CU quarterbacks [Tyler Hansen](#)^[10] and [Cody Hawkins](#)^[11] in summer 7-on-7 drills, but there are a lot of new faces to take a crash course in learning the offense and to "get on the same page," as coaches like to say. McKnight is three catches away from becoming the school's all-time leader in receptions, but everybody else is largely unproven – at least in a CU uniform and against [Big 12](#)^[4] competition.

What to look for: Newcomers Clemons, Patterson and Richardson are among the fastest players on the team and, for the first time in [Dan Hawkins](#)^[2], five years as coach, the Buffs will be able to stretch the defense and give McKnight more room to work underneath. This could be a lethal group if CU quarterbacks have time to throw and can get them the ball.

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Longmont, Colorado
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Lockridge cruising

By Brian Howell
© 2010 Longmont Times-Call

BOULDER — Brian Lockridge fielded the ball at the 2-yard-line and sprinted ahead.

After busting loose, the University of Colorado speedster made a cut to get past two Oklahoma State defenders and then exploded to pull away from the rest of them.

Lockridge's 98-yard kickoff return for a touchdown was one of the top highlights of CU's 2009 season.

It was also an indication that Lockridge's speed is a special asset that the Buffs could use to their advantage.

"We have guys as fast, but I don't think there's anybody faster than him on our team," CU head coach Dan Hawkins said. "He can house it, as evidenced in the Okie State game."

Lockridge is now a junior, and the tailback/kick returner is looking to make more big plays for the Buffs.

"I just want to excel and one-up what I did last year and become a more well-rounded running back," he said. "In the kicking game, I would like to lead the Big 12."

The 5-foot-7, 185-pound Lockridge has quite a fight on his hands just to get playing time.

At tailback, he is second on the depth chart to junior starter Rodney Stewart. Lockridge also has to battle redshirt freshman Quentin Hildreth and a stable of true freshmen.

Despite being the Buffs' leader in kick returns last year, Lockridge has competition there, too — from newcomer Travon Patterson, among others.

So far, Lockridge has not backed down from the competition. He's having a great fall camp with the Buffs.

"I think the more competition we have, the better I'll get," he said. "You always have to work when you have competition, and I'm glad it's like that."

Hawkins has seen a difference in Lockridge this fall.

"He just has a much better understanding of what it is we're trying to do and all the nuances to it," he said. "It's amazing."

Lockridge came to CU as a virtual newcomer to the game of football. He said he was basically the water boy during his first year of high school. It wasn't until his sophomore year that he really played.



Colorado tailback Brian Lockridge runs for the end zone during a scrimmage Thursday at Folsom Field in Boulder. **Joshua Buck/Times-Call**

"I never watched sports at all," he said of his youth. "I never really got the hang of watching sports.

"I was more into Animal Planet and playing the piano. I've played the piano for 15 years. I was more on the artistic side."

In fact, Lockridge said he only joined football "because my friends were playing.

"Honestly, I couldn't tell you the difference between the offense or the defense at that time."

He wound up posting three 1,000-yard rushing seasons in high school before signing with CU.

After playing for the Buffs as a true freshman in 2007, he missed part of spring practice in 2008 with a sports hernia and then redshirted that year. He says that he's thankful now for that redshirt year.

Last year, he carried the ball just 12 times for 53 yards, but he also had 30 kickoff returns for 699 yards.

The best may be yet to come.

Although he and Stewart (5-6, 175) are similar in size, they are different in running style — and Lockridge believes they can be a good 1-2 punch.

So far, he's on the right track. He's had a good camp, including a team-best 46 yards on 10 carries during the team's first scrimmage last Thursday.

"(Fall camp) is going really well," he said. "I'm learning a lot. I'm more experienced this year. I'm ready to go this year."

Football, he said, has become one of his passions. But he hasn't given up his others.

"I play the piano every time I get a chance," he said on Sunday. "I actually played this morning because we had this morning off.

"Animal Planet? That's all I watch."

EXTRA POINTS; Hawkins said he believes the Buffs are further along now than they have been at similar points in his previous years with the team. "Yeah, for sure," he said. "They had a great summer. We still have some new guys, getting Travon and some of those guys in the mix, but yeah, I think we're quite a ways further than before." ... The Buffs had a light walk-through practice on Sunday night. ... They will practice twice today.

Brian Howell can be reached at bhowell@times-call.com. Read his Buffs blog at www.timescall.com/blogs/howell.