

Tyler Hansen officially named CU Buffs starting quarterback

By Kyle Ringo Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 08/21/2010 09:43:26 AM MDT

Not long after it was announced Saturday that Tyler Hansen had won the starting quarterback job for the Colorado Buffaloes this fall, Hansen began talking about wanting to be a point guard.

The junior managed to hold off senior Cody Hawkins through spring ball and fall camp, which concludes today with the selection of team captains, by taking the game and his position on the team more seriously. Now he has to make it stick by being a vocal leader when it is needed, making smart decisions and distributing the ball and allowing his teammates to make plays.

"I don't have to win the game," Hansen said. "I've just got to give the ball to (Toney Clemons), give the ball to Scotty (McKnight) and give the ball to Travon (Patterson) and let them win the game. I've just got to be a point guard out there."

Hansen took over as the starter in the sixth game last season and led the team to a 2-5 record. He was determined to get better during the offseason and hold on to the job knowing he would face a big push from Hawkins who would want to reclaim the role in his senior year.

Hansen changed how he handled himself and his schedule on a day-to-day basis to make it happen. He leaned heavily on his father, Rick Hansen, a one-time starting quarterback at San Diego State and current high school coach in southern California, for advice and encouragement.

"I think I changed my attitude and the way I was going towards football," Hansen said. "I concentrated more. I focused more. I watched a lot more film, I got in the play book a lot more. I just focused on stuff that I needed to gain a little edge, like Cody had on me."

His teammates began to notice changes on and off the field early last winter in offseason conditioning and in Hansen's demeanor. It carried over to spring ball when he began to improve his efficiency numbers in scrimmages.

"The biggest thing that no one would notice because it's hard to unless you're around the guy every day is that he was in here watching film every day, learning defenses," wide receiver Scotty McKnight said. "That's a huge part of the offense, grasping it and knowing where defenders are going to be given the circumstances. Just that and then also the leadership thing."

"Cody has always been a vocal guy. That's tough too sometimes when you have two quarterbacks that are both vocal. So Tyler stepped up his side of it and started talking to guys more and really established himself as a leader on the team."

Cody Hawkins is already assured of some opportunities to be on the field as a senior, and he will be rooting hard for the offense to score touchdowns or get into field-goal position. He is the first-team holder for field goals and extra points.

Hawkins is likely to see meaningful playing time at some point this fall beyond his special teams work. Coaches and Hansen noted that it's difficult for a starting quarterback to play every snap of a 12-game season at the BCS level.

Dan Hawkins said the program is fortunate to have two capable and experienced players at a key position. He said he is proud of the way each handled the process. Hawkins said he believes it will help Hansen to know he is the starter from the beginning this year as opposed to the past two seasons when he expected to redshirt but was called on to play.

"I think any time there is clarity, that is better for the kids," Hawkins said. "There is no question about that, but sometimes there isn't that."

Though the decision to name Hansen the starter didn't surprise many and was predicted throughout the offseason by reporters and fans, offensive coordinator Eric Kiesau said it was a difficult decision that could easily have gone the other way. Kiesau noted that Hawkins actually produced better statistics and was slightly more efficient leading the team in the most recent scrimmage on Thursday than Hansen.

Kiesau backed up what coach Dan Hawkins has been saying all along, the competition between Hansen and his son was "razor thin."

"I think it was just time to let Tyler have the keys to the car so to speak and kind of run with it," Kiesau said. "He needs to go play and cut loose and have some fun. So it wasn't an easy decision, but I think it was the right decision for the team right now and where we're at. We'll let him run with it."

Hansen's running ability is one facet of the game that sets him apart. Even Cody Hawkins admitted as much after the scrimmage Thursday. The Buffs have some designed quarterback runs in the offense to make use of Hansen's athletic ability.

"If we need a little bit more help running the ball, then Tyler definitely has the edge there cause if you're mobile and they have to account for you, that will definitely open up things in the run game," Cody Hawkins said.

Hansen said he felt both relief and excitement when he learned coaches were sticking with him. He will play in a nonconference game and face Colorado State for the first time in his career in two weeks at Invesco Field in Denver. He spent the past nine months eagerly awaiting the opportunity and working hard to make it happen.

"It feels really good," Hansen said. "It's kind of getting the monkey off your back a little bit, kind of a big relief, a stress reliever. Now I've got a lot of work to do. I've got a job to lead this team to a lot of wins this year. I'm going to prepare myself the best to do it, and I'm looking forward to it."

Close Window

Send To Printer

Changes for Olatoye, Daniels, Iltis

CU's depth chart reveals position moves, standings

By Kyle Ringo Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 08/21/2010 11:50:03 PM MDT

Quarterbacks always get the headlines, but other notes of interests emerged from Colorado's fall camp on the final day of two-a-day practices Saturday when the program released a preliminary depth chart for the season opener in two weeks.

A few notable names had either made moves up the depth chart or made moves to different positions than where they started fall camp back on Aug. 5.

Redshirt freshman Deji Olatoye, for example, moved from cornerback to strong safety about a week ago. That is also about the same time junior Shawn Daniels began taking most of his reps at center. He is now listed as the second-team center, backing up Keenan Stevens.

Junior Mike Iltis, who started camp expecting to battle Stevens for the starting job at center has moved to left guard where he is listed with the second team behind Ethan Adkins.

Offensive line coach Denver Johnson said if there was a game played Saturday and he needed to take Stevens out at center for any reason, Daniels would be the man who replaced him.

Sophomore Bryce Givens is now listed as a co-starter at right tackle. He started eight games there last fall but redshirt freshman David Bakhtiari was leading for the starting job when camp began.

Two other players qualified as surprises by earning starting spots to this point. Junior Josh Hartigan is the first-team left defensive end, ahead of sophomore Forrest West. Junior Tyler Ahles has moved ahead of senior B.J. Beatty at outside linebacker, though coach Dan Hawkins said Beatty has been slowed by a leg injury during much of camp and that played a part in Ahles' move up.

"He's really grown up," Hawkins said of Ahles. "Really proud of him. He's really matured in every sense of the word. He is a leader. He's a physical player. He knows what's going on.

"He's one of the light posts you've got to have on your team who is making sure that tempo is going OK and guys are doing what they are supposed to be doing. You just see the maturity, the questions he asks in meetings and how he pays attention."

Hawkins grinned widely Saturday when asked to comment on so few freshmen and sophomores being listed in his two-deep depth chart for the first time in his five seasons in Boulder.

"You naturally hope that that is where you get to," he said. "The balance of your roster should be your juniors and your seniors sprinkled in with a couple of sophomores. That's the way it should look."

The only two true freshmen listed in the two-deep were wide receiver Paul Richardson, who is listed as a co-starter alone with senior Travon Patterson at the Z receiver position and cornerback Jered Bell, who is listed as the second team left cornerback behind senior Jalil Brown. However, defensive coordinator Ron Collins said redshirt freshman Paul Vigo would likely be the first player off the bench if a safety or cornerback needed a substitution.

Coaches emphasized competition at most positions is ongoing and the depth chart could still change before the season opener. Hawkins is not a fan of depth charts or questions about them. He often lists players at some positions in groupings, such as running back.

None of the four freshmen tailbacks on the roster were included in the tailback grouping on the preliminary depth chart, but coaches have already indicated at least one of those players, J.T. Torres, will play this season.

Place-kicker is the one area where coaches still have decisions to make. Senior Aric Goodman, freshman Justin Castor and junior Marcus Kirkwood are listed together as co-starters. Goodman has struggled with accuracy and consistency the past two years. Hawkins said all three have kicked well in camp.

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

Woelk: Hansen met challenge, earned job

Neill Woelk Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 08/21/2010 11:55:48 PM MDT

Feel better, Buff nation?

The Colorado coaching staff ended the "suspense" surrounding CU's starting quarterback Saturday by announcing that Tyler Hansen will indeed be the man when the Buffs open the season Sept. 4 against Colorado State.

Not that the news should have come as a surprise to anyone paying even a lick of attention. While radio talk show hosts whined and Buff fans fretted over Dan Hawkins' refusal to name a starter, there really wasn't much doubt among coaches or players -- and neither was there really any hurry.

Saturday's official announcement simply confirmed what had become more and more evident as fall camp progressed.

Hansen won the job. The leader after spring ball and the leader heading into fall camp is now the clear No. 1.

The best news is that this was not a contest decided by default. Hansen not only didn't lose the job, he solidified himself as the top choice within outstanding two weeks of practice.

Cody Hawkins didn't play poorly. In fact, he had a very solid camp.

But Hansen was just a little bit better. CU's coaches put some pressure on Hansen by challenging him, and he responded. That's exactly what they wanted -- and needed -- to see from their starting quarterback.

Both Dan Hawkins and offensive coordinator Eric Kiesau said the competition between Hansen and Cody Hawkins has been close throughout camp. True enough. Their passing statistics, by all accounts, were startlingly similar.

But if you need a hint as to why Hansen emerged as the leader, Kiesau said it best:

"He's going to make defenses defend 11-on-11."

That's been the biggest difference between the two. The Buffs can include Hansen's legs in the game plan, something they simply can't do if Hawkins is the QB.

Hansen's running ability has always been evident. But now, the Buffs can design their attack with that ability in mind -- and opposing defenses will be forced to take that into account.

It showed in the spring game when Hansen ran for 34 yards (not counting sacks) and a touchdown. It became more evident in the first fall scrimmage, when Hansen had a 16-yard touchdown run. And, while the second scrimmage was closed to public and media, reports are that Hansen's legs again played a role in CU's attack.

It's that extra dimension that helped him win the job and keep it -- and it's why he admits he wasn't surprised when the coaches told him Friday afternoon that he would be the starter.

"I can't say I wasn't expecting it, because I think I've had a good camp," Hansen said. "But it was nice to hear. You always want to get confirmation, and I felt like I'd earned it."

The timing of the announcement is good for the team. While most players said they "assumed" that Hansen would be the starter, based on his number of snaps with the No. 1 offense, the affirmation nevertheless gives them clear focus for the next two weeks.

No questions, no doubts. The Buffs will begin installing the specifics of their Colorado State game plan on Tuesday, and every player on offense will be comfortable with the nuances Hansen brings to the table.

Kiesau and Dan Hawkins both made it clear that Hansen won't be playing with a noose hanging around his neck. He'll have the latitude to make some mistakes, and the chance to make some big plays.

But either way, he won't have to worry about getting the hook at the first sign of trouble.

"I don't have to win the game," Hansen said. "We've got weapons in a lot of places."

That's the voice of experience there, something that Hansen didn't have a year ago when he was rushed out of his redshirt and into action for the second season in a row.

This is a different Tyler Hansen and a different season. Now, he's a quarterback whose natural ability is accompanied by confidence and experience, qualities that come only with time.

Now, it's Tyler Hansen's time.

As he said, he earned it.

Close Window

Send To Printer

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

cu football

Cefalo's call to friend Cody Hawkins leads him to CU

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

Posted: 08/22/2010 01:00:00 AM MDT

BOULDER — Feeling a bit "lost" after an arm injury at Oregon State ended a promising pitching career, Kyle Cefalo was biding his time at a community college when he decided to give his old high school buddy a phone call after watching him on TV.

It was Sept. 18, 2008, a Thursday night ESPN game in Boulder, and Colorado quarterback Cody Hawkins had just led the Buffaloes to an overtime victory over No. 21 West Virginia.

Cefalo will never forget the conversation that turned him into a CU receiver. Cefalo had intended to merely congratulate Hawkins. The subject soon turned to something else.

"I hadn't talked to Cody in a while, and I told him what was going on with me," Cefalo recalled

after a recent practice.

"He mentioned football. He said I should come to

Colorado Football

[View slide show of Buffs RB Rodney "Speedy" Stewart.](#)

[Preview CU's 2010 team, broken down by unit, including QBs, RBs and OLs.](#)

[View slide show of CU scrimmage at Folsom Field on Aug. 12.](#)

[Read a preseason Q&A with CU football coach Dan Hawkins.](#)

[Visit the CU Stats Page for boxscores, Big 12 standings, team leaders and more.](#)

[Find analysis, notes and buzz on the All Things Buffs blog.](#)

Colorado and play football. I kind of thought about it, and then it just kind of happened."

A junior in eligibility, Cefalo has not played in a real football game in almost four years — not since he quarterbacked Bishop Kelly High School in the 2006 Idaho state championship game. That's the same high school that Hawkins had directed to state titles in 2004 and 2005 before joining his father, CU coach Dan Hawkins, in Boulder.

Yes, Cefalo could be the answer to a trivia question:

Advertisement



Save \$26 a month
and lock in your price for ONE YEAR!
Switch today! 1-877-866-8603

Print Powered By FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

Besides Tyler Hansen, which player on the Colorado roster has replaced Cody Hawkins at quarterback?

"In high school, Kyle was always a really good athlete," Cody Hawkins said. "We always talked about football jokingly, but baseball was always what Kyle did. Unfortunately, he dinged up his arm and things weren't the same for him anymore.

"I was always telling him he should come play football. Finally he said, 'Hey, how serious were you when you told me I should come and play football?' I told him he could come here as a walk-on and he'd do a great job."

There's nothing trivial about Cefalo's abilities. Although just 5-feet-10 and 175 pounds, Cefalo

always seems to come up big in scrimmages and practices. In the Aug. 12 scrimmage, he ranked second in receptions, averaging 14.5 yards for six catches. Cefalo isn't CU's fastest wideout. But he may be the team's quickest player for 10 yards.



University of Colorado wide receiver Kyle Cefalo (35) was talked into walking on to the Buffs football team after a conversation in 2009 with quarterback Cody Hawkins (7). Cefalo and Hawkins attended the same high school. They practiced together Friday night, August 20, 2010 in Boulder. Karl Gehring, The Denver Post (THE DENVER POST | KARL GEHRING)

Cefalo is certainly the most slippery. Seemingly overnight, Colorado has become loaded at wide receiver — with the additions of athletic transfers and late arrivals. But coaches say Cefalo's skill set has found a niche. In the Buffs'

Advertisement

Eat Great, Lose Weight!

© 2009 eDiets.com, Inc. All rights reserved. epicurious is a TM of Conde Nast Digital. Redbook is a TM of Hearst Communication, Inc.

Call **1-888-378-3151**
and get a **FREE** week of meals plus
a **BONUS \$25 gift!**

eDiets
fresh
prepared
meal delivery

Rated #1 best-tasting
by epicurious.com
"Best bang for your buck!"
- Redbook

Print Powered By FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

first two-deep roster released Saturday, Cefalo is listed No. 2 at "H" receiver behind Scotty McKnight.

"He'll be in the mix," Dan Hawkins said of Cefalo. "He's a guy that can turn a 4-yard hitch into an 8-yard play because he's going to turn and get upfield. He's very crafty. He's a lot faster than people think. He's very quick-footed and a smart guy. He's tough too. You put all that stuff together, and he will definitely have a role."

Some CU fans may not get excited over turning a 4-yarder into an 8-yarder — unless, of course, it's third-and-5.

"Kyle may not be a guy that's going to take it 80 yards to the house," Cody Hawkins said. "But if you're talking yards after the catch on an average play, he's going to get you something extra."

"He just finds a way to wiggle around. He's going to get extra yards. He'll knife in there and dive at linebackers' knees rather than taking a shot."

After leading Bishop Kelly to two league championships in baseball, Cefalo earned a scholarship to Oregon State, a top-tier program coming off consecutive NCAA championships (2006 and '07).

But his baseball career ended before it started. A left-hander, he developed nerve damage in the back of his shoulder soon after arriving in Corvallis in the fall of 2007 and was forced to

quit the sport.

Wondering what to do with his life, Cefalo took some classes at Wenatchee (Wash.) Community College, from where he phoned Cody Hawkins after the CU-West Virginia game.

"I really didn't immediately think of football. I wasn't too sure what I'd do," Cefalo recalled. "I was really kind of lost. I couldn't really imagine my life without sports. I didn't want to sit around and just go to college. I wanted to be in sports."

Cefalo has participated in two CU spring games but looks forward to the Sept. 4 opener against Colorado State. He finished 2010 spring drills with the most total receptions (16) for three scrimmages. A sore toe has hampered him a bit recently, but that should not keep him out of the CSU game.

Cody Hawkins has no doubts about Cefalo being a valuable contributor this season. He teases Cefalo about being "the next Scotty McKnight," a 5-11, 185-pound senior and former walk-on who needs just three catches to become the school's all-time receptions leader. McKnight befriended Cody Hawkins during a high school quarterback camp in Southern California — a big reason McKnight chose Colorado.

"I always say my two best recruits were Scotty McKnight and Kyle Cefalo," Cody Hawkins said. "They're panning out well."

Tom Kensler: 303-954-1280 or

Advertisement

PROTECT YOUR HOME

FREE Home Security System!

\$850 Value!

CALL NOW and receive a **FREE** wireless remote control with **PANIC BUTTON!**



1-877-246-7519

Mon-Fri 9am - 10pm - Sat 9am-7pm - Sun 11am - 6pm EST

At no cost to you for parts and activation with only a \$99 installation fee and the purchase of alarm monitoring services. Terms & Conditions apply.



Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

cu football - briefs

It's official: Hansen will be Colorado's starting QB

By John Henderson
The Denver Post

Posted: 08/22/2010 01:00:00 AM MDT

BOULDER — In an announcement that didn't send any shock waves through Colorado's football team, let alone the Big 12, on Saturday, junior Tyler Hansen was named the Buffaloes' starting quarterback.

Hansen had begun the last two seasons on the bench but eventually earned the starting job. The release of the first fall camp depth chart marks the first time he has officially beaten out Cody Hawkins, the coach's senior son, to start the season.

"I was expecting it just because last year I started the last seven games and coming out of spring I was on top of the depth chart, but it's always a relief," Hansen said after the team's picture day. "I had to earn it in camp. It wasn't anything that was given to me."

The pair had similar statistics a year ago. Hansen threw for 1,440 yards, eight touchdowns and

seven interceptions for a 113.6 quarterback rating, and Hawkins threw for 1,277, 10 TDs and 11 interceptions for a 100.1 rating. They both played in eight games.

Coach Dan Hawkins called the decision a "slim margin." It's best for the team to know now with the opener against Colorado State at Invesco Field at Mile High on Sept. 4 only 14 days away.

"That's good, but he's been in the driver's seat since spring, so it's not a huge shock to them," Dan Hawkins said.

What might benefit Hansen the most is not get thrown to the wolves against Big 12 opponents.

"I'll get a full four games before Big 12 play, which will help me immensely," he said. "I can get my feet wet, get my momentum going, get comfortable and go into Big 12 play with a head of steam."

Patterson gets return job.

Senior Travon Patterson, the speedy Southern California transfer, earned the punt return job.

He returned punts in USC's opener last year against San Jose State but made fair catches on his only three attempts. He returned a half-dozen punts for touchdowns his senior year at Long Beach (Calif.) Poly High.

"I'm very excited," he said. "They put their trust in me. It's going to be a great opportunity for me

Advertisement

Own a new computer for just \$29.99* per week!

And improve your credit score at the same time!

Give us a call today!

1-877-294-3988

*Prices start at \$29.99 but may vary by model.



Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

to showcase my talents."

Beatty second team.

One surprise on the depth chart: Senior B.J. Beatty, a returning starter, is listed behind junior Tyler Ahles at outside linebacker. Ahles (6-feet-2, 245 pounds) started against Iowa State and Oklahoma State last year.

"We've been limited through the years, so (Beatty) has some competition," linebackers coach Brian Cabral said. "And that's a good thing for the Buffaloes."

Advertisement



SAVE up to **64%**
Plus, get
3 FREE Gifts



Special Code: 45069ZWN

To Order: www.OmahaSteaks.com/print71 or call 1-877-586-4455

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

AUGUST 21, 2010, 11:48 AM

Hansen named CU starting QB as depth chart released

By **TOM KENSLE** |  1 Comment

The announcement didn't come soon enough for many Colorado fans, but as expected and anticipated, Colorado junior Tyler Hansen was named today as the Buffs' starting quarterback.

"I'm excited ... it's something I've worked long and hard for," Hansen told the school's website.

Coach Dan Hawkins acknowledged that Hansen "has been getting the majority of the 'reps' with the ones anyway."

Offensive coordinator Eric Kiesau told the school's website that the perceived delay in the announcement was due to giving Hansen and senior Cody Hawkins "ample opportunity to show what they can do," and to "see if one guy could pull away from the other."

In addition to the starting QB announcement, the first depth chart of August drills was released this morning and it evidently will serve as the depth chart for the Sept. 4 opener against Colorado State at Invesco Field at Mile High.

Some observations:

- Junior Josh Hartigan is listed as the starter ahead of sophomore Forrest West at left defensive end. Coaches say Hartigan is playing the best football of his career, but I suspect part of the reason is West being out until this week after undergoing knee surgery in late July to repair a torn meniscus.
- Junior Sam linebacker Tyler Ahles is listed with the first team, ahead of returning senior starter B.J. Beatty. Beatty has missed time with a leg injury.
- Senior wide receiver Travon Patterson, the transfer from Southern Cal, has won the job as the primary punt returner.
- In one of the best position battles of the spring, sophomore Bryce Givens and redshirt-freshman David Bakhtiari are listed as co-first teamers at right offensive tackle.
- As expected, redshirt freshman Parker Orms, the former Wheat Ridge High standout, is the starting nickel back.
- True freshmen Jered Bell and Josh Moten are listed behind senior starting left cornerback Jalil Brown.
- Redshirt freshman Deji Olatoye, a cornerback through spring drills, is now second-team strong safety behind junior Anthony Perkins.
- None of the quartet of true-freshman tailbacks is listed on the depth chart, which goes four deep at tailback.
- Placekicker is still listed as a three-man race among senior Aric Goodman, true-freshman Justin Castor and junior transfer Marcus Kirkwood.

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

Longmont, Colorado
Monday, August 23, 2010

Publish Date: 8/22/2010

Putting It On The Line

By Brian Howell
© 2010 Longmont Times-Call

BOULDER — A year ago, the Colorado Buffaloes had high hopes for their offensive line.

Yes, it was young. But, it was also talented. The line was expected to be a strength in 2009.

It wasn't.

Colorado gave up 44 sacks — only three of the other 119 Division I schools gave up more — and ran for just 87.9 yards per game, ranking 113th.

"I'm not sure the expectations (for 2009) were too high," CU offensive line coach Denver Johnson said. "They were probably just too early."

As the Buffaloes prepare for the 2010 season, they are again looking to their offensive line to be a strength. And this time, it just might be.

"We've come a long way from a year ago," Johnson said. "We're still, I think, a long ways from where we ultimately want to be. But, I believe we're moving in the right direction."

"I'm not ready to declare that we've arrived, but I think we're certainly progressing."

That's a start.

Just a few years ago, the Buffs didn't even have enough healthy linemen to form a second unit. They had six linemen on the roster in the spring of 2007. Today, the Buffs have 18 linemen on scholarship, nearly enough to field four units.

In addition to lack of depth in the past, the Buffs struggled with inexperience. Last season, CU didn't have any seniors on the offensive line. The depth chart released Saturday includes two steady seniors — left tackle Nate Solder and center Keenan Stevens. In addition, there is a host of experienced juniors in the group.

Fielding so many veteran players has already proven to be a benefit.

"We've just gotten better this year," Stevens said. "I know (the offense) a lot better. We're working on a lot more advanced stuff than we were last year at this point."

Despite struggling last season, the Buffs knew that everyone was coming back for 2010. With that in mind, they have put an emphasis on making this year a better one.

"We've spent a lot more time in film study," said junior Ryan Miller, who is slated to start at right guard. "You've got to know your assignment and you've got to do your homework."



Offensive tackle Nate Solder makes his way to the University of Colorado football practice field in Boulder on Aug. 5. **Joshua Buck/Times-Call**

Offensive linemen are known for their massive size, and CU's group certainly has that. Solder, who is a preseason All-American candidate, is 6-foot-9, 315 pounds. Miller, who has also received preseason accolades, is 6-8, 310.

Left guard Ethan Adkins (6-4, 315), Stevens (6-2, 290) and right tackles Bryce Givens (6-6, 275) and David Bakhtiari (6-4, 275) also have tremendous size.

Where the Buffs hope to show improvement, however, is in the mental aspects of the game.

"You have to be big and brute, but you also have to be agile and you have to be smart," Miller said. "You have to know what you're doing. You can be the biggest or strongest guy, but if you don't know who to block, you aren't worth a dang."

Solder and Stevens said they have already seen a difference in the football knowledge the linemen brought to the table this fall.

"Our protections are cleaner, and guys know where they're going," Solder said. "Guys have gotten stronger, more fundamentally sound."

Simply having depth has helped the Buffs get to this point. The depth has created intense competition across the board. Solder is probably the only player in the group whose spot is secure.

Linemen who have started games for the Buffs — such as Adkins, Givens and Mike Iltis — are fighting for positions. They're fighting because players such as redshirt freshman Jack Harris, Bakhtiari and junior Shawn Daniels have improved.

"I think (the competition) is good, just because everyone has something to come and earn at practice every day," said Harris, who hurt his left shoulder last week and is likely out for a couple of weeks.

The one thing the group can't control is injuries. Poor health was a major factor in 2009, as Solder was the only lineman to start every game at the same position.

So far in camp, the Buffs have been relatively healthy. Aside from Harris, guard Max Tuioti-Mariner has been slowed by knee problems. Other than that, the line has avoided injuries.

The general consensus, however, is that the Buffs are better equipped to handle injuries than they were a year ago.

"You get one guy that goes down, people are going to be there to back him up," Solder said. "It was a little bit tougher last year, a little bit thinner."

Regardless of which players are on the field this fall, the Buffs know that their line has to perform well for the team to improve upon last year's 3-9 record. And, they have no doubt they will improve as a unit.

"We've been working hard, and I think we're going to do well this year as a line," Stevens said. "I feel like we're really strong. We have some big guys, fast guys, some smart guys in there, and we all work well together. We're a critical part of this team doing well this season."

Colorado's skill players, including quarterback Tyler Hansen and tailback Rodney Stewart, are counting on the offensive line to have a better season.

"If we protect the quarterback and we're running the ball the way we should, things should be good," Solder said. "That's where it all starts."

With more experience and better physical skills this fall, the CU offensive linemen are making it a priority to meet the expectations they had a year ago.

"If your line is mediocre, you're probably going to be mediocre (as a team)," he said. "If your line is pretty good, you're probably going to be pretty good."

“It really doesn’t vary much from that.”

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

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

Longmont, Colorado
Monday, August 23, 2010

Publish Date: 8/22/2010

Hansen named starter

By Brian Howell
© 2010 Longmont Times-Call

BOULDER — University of Colorado football fans got the answer they've been waiting for on Saturday.

Junior Tyler Hansen will be the starting quarterback when the Buffaloes open the season Sept. 4 against Colorado State.

"I love it," Hansen said. "It's good to have confidence from the team, confidence from the coaches and pretty much everyone around you. It feels really nice, and I'm looking forward to it."

Saturday's announcement really wasn't much of a surprise.

After all, Hansen was moved into the starting lineup in Week 6 of the 2009 season and started the final seven games. He stayed at No. 1 throughout spring practice and has taken the majority of the first-team reps during fall camp.

"Everybody's waiting for this billboard that comes up on I-25 (announcing the starter)," head coach Dan Hawkins said. "Tyler has kind of been in the same position the whole time. Yeah, it might be a little more boost (of confidence for Hansen), but he's kind of been there."

This wasn't an easy choice, however.

Senior Cody Hawkins has been a starter in each of the past three seasons. He has 28 career starts under his belt and holds CU's all-time records for touchdown passes (46) and interceptions (36). He'll go into the CSU game at No. 2 on the depth chart.

"We have two really good ones, you know, and we're very fortunate that way," Dan Hawkins said. "They both have not been in an enviable position, but they've both handled it great, the whole time."

"Both of those guys really have done a great job this camp. I think their numbers are way above what we've done before. That's due to a lot of factors, but we're getting pretty efficient play out of our quarterbacks and you've got to have that."

Hansen has gone into each of the past two seasons believing he would redshirt. Instead, he has had his redshirt pulled so he could relieve Cody Hawkins.

Going into the season as the starter will be a new feeling for Hansen.

"When coming in halfway through the season, you're kind of looking over your shoulder a little bit," he said before fall camp began. "You don't want to say that, but you kind of are. Going in as the starter in Day 1, you cannot have that and you can just perform and execute."



Colorado quarterback Tyler Hansen runs through drills in Boulder on Aug. 5. **Joshua Buck/Times-Call**

That's what the Buffs want Hansen to do, and he has got the skills to be successful.

Hansen started the final seven games of the 2009 season, including a 34-30 win over then-No. 17 Kansas in his first start. Hansen completed 129-of-231 passes for 1,440 yards, eight touchdowns and seven interceptions. Not counting the times he was sacked, he had 339 rushing yards.

"It's a challenge," Hansen said. "I have to go out there and produce on Saturdays. I can't just go out there and lay an egg. I have to go out there and be a (key) guy."

Coming into fall camp as the backup, Cody Hawkins said he was willing to do whatever was asked of him.

"Sometimes, I have to be a little selfless and do what's best for the program," he said.

A year ago, coach Hawkins didn't announce a starter publicly until the day of the season opener. This time, they took the drama out of the decision.

"Any time there's clarity, that's better for the kids, no question about that," Dan Hawkins said.

For Hansen, it will mark the first time he has had an opportunity to prepare for the season as the starter. Instead of being rushed into duty, he can relax and get himself ready for the season.

"It feels really good," he said. "Two weeks is a lot of time, and you can do a lot of thinking and get your mind right for the game."

AHLES TO START OVER BEATTY: There weren't many surprises on the depth chart CU released on Saturday.

But one spot that raised eyebrows was at outside linebacker, where junior Tyler Ahles is listed as the starter ahead of senior B.J. Beatty, who started 10 games in 2009.

Coach Hawkins said Beatty's health (he missed part of the fall with a bad hamstring) played a role in the decision, but Ahles' strong play was more of a factor.

"He's really growing up. I'm really proud of him," Hawkins said. "He's one of those lightposts you have to have on your team that's making sure tempo is going OK and the guys are doing what they're supposed to be doing."

HARTIGAN A STARTER: Junior Josh Hartigan continues to impress Buffs coaches, so much so that he is now a starter at defensive end.

"All he's done is just work his tail off," coach Hawkins said. "All I know is who shows up and who works and who gets it done."

Marquez Herrod is the other starter at end, but others, such as Forrest West and Nick Kasa, will see plenty of playing time, too.

UNSETTLED: Not every position has been set.

Bryce Givens and David Bakhtiari are still fighting for the right tackle spot.

At kicker, Aric Goodman, Justin Castor and Marcus Kirkwood are all still competing.

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

Buffs pick Hansen as starting QB

Christina Dickinson 1 day ago

BOULDER - The University of Colorado has named Tyler Hansen as the starting quarterback for the home opener against Colorado State on Sept. 4.

Hansen, a junior, will be the Buffaloes' main man when they face off against the Rams at Invesco Field at Mile High. Senior Cody Hawkins, the three-year starter in the position, will be Hansen's backup.

"I'm excited . . . it's something I've worked long and hard for," Hansen said in a statement released Saturday.

According to the CU statement, Hansen will take about 75 percent of the snaps with the No. 1 offense to Cody Hawkins' 25 percent leading up to the Rocky Mountain Showdown against CSU.

The question of who would be CU's starting quarterback has been in fans minds for most of camp, and maybe even longer since Hansen started the last seven games of the 2009 season instead of Cody Hawkins.

Last season, Hansen completed 55.8 percent of his passes (129-of-231) for 1,440 yards and eight touchdowns. In comparison, Cody Hawkins completed 50.6 percent (121-for-239) of his passes for 1,279 yards and 10 touchdowns.

"It was kind of like last year where Cody was ahead by a sliver, and right now Tyler is just ahead by a sliver . . . their numbers are so close [now] it's scary. But that's not everything by any means," CU coach Dan Hawkins, and father of Cody Hawkins, said in Saturday's statement.

(KUSA-TV © 2010 Multimedia Holdings Corporation)

Advertisement

USA TODAY
AutoPilot 

The new travel app for iPhone® and iPod touch®

Presented by: 

SEE HOW IT WORKS »

Print Powered By  **FormatDynamics™**

Dan Hawkins chooses Tyler Hansen over his son Cody to start at quarterback for Colorado

 Recommend  comment(0)  email  print  Facebook  Twitter  rss

Dan Hawkins chooses Tyler Hansen over his son Cody to start at quarterback for Colorado

Hunter Ansley - FOXSportsSouthwest.com

In a quarterback competition that sometimes seems to have no winner, Tyler Hansen has emerged victorious.

Hansen was listed as the starting passer for Colorado on Saturday's depth chart, the first the Buffaloes have released this fall. The junior has worked with the No. 1 offense throughout camp, and he'll continue that reign heading into the season.

Cody Hawkins, son of head coach Dan Hawkins, finishes with the silver medal, for now. Colorado has notoriously switched starters during the elder Hawkins' tenure, and although the penciled-in position is nice, it's certainly not guaranteed for the entire season.

The 6-1, 205 pound Hansen stepped in for the coach's son for the final seven games of the 2009 season and carried that momentum into the spring.

Hawkins' 28 career starts led to an open competition this fall. And although he has the edge in experience, mixed results that have leaned heavily toward the negative opened the door for every fan's favorite quarterback, the one-time backup, to take the lead as the 2010 season approaches.

However, there are no hard feelings in Boulder, and Dan Hawkins reiterated that he's proud of the way both athletes have handled the situation.

"We have two really good [quarterbacks], you know, and we're very fortunate that way," Coach Hawkins said. "They both have not been in an enviable position, but they've both handled it great, the whole time. We'll need both of them. Cody's got to be ready."

And ready he will be. Over his career, Hawkins has amassed 6186 passing yards and 49 touchdowns through the air. Of course, he's also added 38 interceptions in three seasons as the sort-of starter. Hansen's been handed the reins nine times throughout his time at CU, racking up 1720 yards to go along with nine scores and 11 picks.

No matter which guy ends up taking the majority of the snaps this season, an offensive line that allowed 21 sacks and paved the way for only 2.78 yards per carry a season ago will have to improve. If not, the nation could quickly learn the name of Colorado's third-string quarterback.

Tags: [Colorado Buffaloes](#), [Dan Hawkins](#), [Tyler Hansen](#), [Cody Hawkins](#)

[Hide Comments](#) | [Add Comments](#)

Add your comments below

You need to log in to post comments.

Username:

password:

[Create an account](#)

Big 12 Headlines

[Five most compelling storylines to watch in the Big 12 - Week 1](#)

[Texas A&M running back Christine Michael talks about the teams offensive weapons](#)

[Big 12 Showcase Preview the Baylor Bears](#)

[Gundy pleased with Oklahoma State's defense](#)

[Preview 2010: Kansas Jayhawks](#)

[Preview 2010: Nebraska Cornhusker Quarterbacks](#)

[Texas Tech Camp Notebook: Potts named starting QB](#)

[Dan Hawkins chooses Tyler Hansen over his son Cody to start at quarterback for Colorado](#)

[Big 12, once known for its quality QBs, isn't so secure behind center](#)

[Garrett Gilbert showing the fire he needs to replace McCoy, sparks UT's offense](#)