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CU's Solder named Big 12 offensive lineman of the year

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Colorado Buffaloes offensive tackle Nate Solder, named today as the Big 12's offensive lineman of the year, could be a first-round NFL draft pick in the spring. (The Denver Post)

Nate Solder is the top offensive lineman in the Big 12, at least in the eyes of the conference's head coaches.

Solder, a 6-foot-9, 315-pound senior, was named the conference's offensive lineman of the year when the All-Big 12 football awards were announced this morning. He was also named first-team all-conference. He was joined on the all-conference team by teammate Jimmy Smith, a cornerback.

Solder, a graduate of Buena Vista High School, is projected by many to be a first-round pick in the 2011 NFL draft.

Seven other CU players earned honorable mention team honors: linebacker B.J. Beatty; defensive back Jalil Brown; tight end Ryan Deehan; defensive lineman Josh Hartigan; wide receiver Scotty McKnight; offensive lineman Ryan Miller; and defensive lineman Will Pericak.

Wideout Paul Richardson also earned honorable mention honors for offensive freshman of the year.

Nebraska senior Pierre Allen, a Thomas Jefferson High graduate, was named to the first team as a defensive lineman.

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Solder named Big 12 Offensive Linesman of the Year

Senior outside tackle also named to All-Big 12 Team

By Esteban L. Hernandez on November 30, 2010

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Senior outside tackle Nate Solder is receiving recognition from more than just his own school after being named team MVP for the Buffs and receiving the CU Zack Jordan Award.

The Big 12 announced on Tuesday that the 6-foot-9-inch, 315-pound offensive linesman made the 2010 Offensive Lineman of the Year. He is the first Buffalo to garner the honor.

The Colorado native out of Buena Vista was also named to the All-Big 12 First Team. Senior cornerback Jimmy Smith was also named to the First Team.

The awards is one of several distinctions Solder has earned during his final year as a Buffalo.

The senior is also one of three finalists for the Outland Trophy, an award given to the top interior lineman in the nation. He is only the second Buff named a finalist after Joe Garten in 1990.

Solder is as tough on the books as he is on opposing linesman.

Solder was one of 16 players named a Scholar-Athlete by the National Football Foundation. The award bestows an \$18,000 postgraduate scholarship to recipients. He is also a finalist for the William V. Campbell Trophy, which is considered the “academic Heisman.”

Participating on all 847 snaps on offensive during the 2010 season, he recorded 18 finish blocks in three different games and 10 touchdown blocks while allowing only two quarterback sacks.

Solder is projected to be a first round pick in the 2011 NFL Draft.

Several other Buffs received All-Big 12 Honorable Mentions: senior linebacker B.J. Beatty, senior cornerback Jalil Brown, junior tight end Ryan Deehan, junior defensive end Josh Hartigan, senior wide



Senior outside tackle Nate Solder, shown here during the Sept. 18 game against Hawaii, was honored with the Big 12's 2010 Offensive Lineman of the Year award on Tuesday. (CU Independent/Patrick Ghidossi)

receiver Scotty McKnight, junior offensive lineman Ryan Miller and sophomore defensive tackle Will Pericak.

Freshman wide receiver Paul Richardson received an honorable mention for Offensive Freshman of the Year.

Contact CU Independent Sports Editor Esteban L. Hernandez at Esteban.hernandez@colorado.edu.

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