

McKnight sets sites on CU's pro day

Former Buff WR aims to improve NFL draft status

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Proving people wrong has become second nature to Scotty McKnight. It's just what he does, especially on the football field.

So while several of his former Colorado teammates are being mentioned as possible first-day picks in the annual National Football League draft in April, McKnight is on the opposite end of the spectrum gearing up to overcome another round of doubters.

He has built a football success story at the high school and college levels despite plenty of people and coaches who didn't believe he had it in him. During his five years as a Buff in Boulder, he became the all-time leading pass catcher in the program's history and also set the mark for receiving touchdowns (22). He caught at least one pass in all 49 games in his career.

McKnight understands he doesn't have some of the physical tools and abilities that other receivers have, but he hopes his college résumé - catching 215 passes over four years mostly in the Big 12 Conference - will merit some consideration as a late-round pick or a free-agent contract.

"For me, the biggest thing now is training and putting up good numbers, and then when I put up good numbers, if a team wants to talk to me, I think that's also going to benefit me to where they will say, 'OK, he has football knowledge and he's able to translate what he sees in the film room on the board to the field.' "

McKnight is co-represented by Nick Sanchez -- older brother of New York Jets quarterback Mark Sanchez -- and Andrew Kessler with Athletes First.

He left Boulder in December to begin workouts back home in Orange County hoping to improve his speed and strength in advance of the draft. He is working out at a facility provided by AthletesFirst along with other prospects from programs around the nation, including former Buffs left tackle Nate Solder, former Washington quarterback Jake Locker, former Texas A&M linebacker Von Miller, former Connecticut running back Jordan Todman and former Oregon State defensive tackle Stephen Paea.

His roommate in an apartment about 10 minutes from the beach and the Pacific Ocean is former Boise State wideout Austin Pettis.

McKnight wasn't invited to the Senior Bowl, East-West Shrine game or the Texas vs. The Nation game, contests which provide draft hopefuls a chance to perform for scouts against other NFL prospects. He said he doesn't know why he wasn't invited to any of those games and his representatives are baffled as well. But he hasn't allowed it to bother him.

McKnight is pouring all his energy into preparing for Colorado's pro day in Boulder on March 9. He knows pretty much every NFL franchise will be on-hand because Solder and former cornerbacks Jimmy Smith and Jalil Brown are all expected to be taken in the draft. Solder and Smith could be first or second-round selections.

It will be his best opportunity to make an impression. He says he is taking the approach that all he has to do is convince one team to give him a shot.

"If I can come out there and surprise people with how hard I've been working then I think that is going to open some eyes," he said.

McKnight's trainers have put together a program aimed at making him more explosive, improving his speed and allowing him to add a little strength, too.

His week is regimented with designed workouts that begin in the morning and continue throughout the day. He has two days off, but even on those days he is involved in lighter workouts such as pool work or games of beach volleyball. He is provided a diet of three meals and several snacks each day and when he isn't working out, mapping out plays, schemes and responsibilities on a board with the other athletes or eating, he sleeps.

"So for me, it's just all about getting explosive," McKnight said. 'Everybody is different. Everyone has their own designed workout. ... Things have gone really, really well for me. I've seen a ton of improvement, which is awesome. And I knew I would because the training is really top-notch."

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