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college football

## Bufs shift focus on summer conditioning

By Natalie Meisler  
*The Denver Post*

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BOULDER — There's a new summertime sheriff in town at the University of Colorado in speed, strength and conditioning director Malcolm Blacken. He followed new coach Jon Embree from the Washington Redskins.

Instead of running and lifting three times a week during their offseason conditioning program as in the past, the Buffs are conditioning four times a week. Player-organized seven-on-seven drills retain the same schedule, but with a renewed purpose.

"It's probably one of the top strength and conditioning programs in the nation," senior quarterback Tyler Hansen said. "Once people find out and we start having results on the field, people will take notice of it."

It's not as if former strength coach Jeff Pitman ran a Sunday softball league. To the contrary, Hansen said: "We were doing some heavy stuff. It's just different-type stuff now. It's not as much heavy power lifting to 500 pounds — it's more body movement stuff, position-specific stuff. . . . It's general high-tech stuff the NFL players are doing."

Said running back Rodney Stewart: "It's harder work. The routine is changing repeatedly."

The NCAA permits nonmandatory summer

workouts overseen by strength and conditioning coaches. Players get breaks right after school ends and the Fourth of July week.

Three days a week, the Buffs run their own unpadded touch football games. The linemen do their own drills.

"We try to work more on technique to get plays down," offensive tackle Jack Harris said. "Some days, we go one-on-one and keep score with that."

There are no whistles, no coaches yelling. Players come and go. There's a lot more laughter on the field.

"The morale of the team is a lot better," Hansen said. "Guys are walking around smiling, having fun. Not that it wasn't like that before. Guys are starting to get more comfortable."

He pointed to Embree's effort to draw the team closer together.

Hansen and defensive captain Anthony Perkins can only use their influence to draw a turnout. When Hansen worked out in a gym in San Diego during the May break, he sought input from NFL quarterback John Beck and recent draftee Ricky Stanzi on how the NFL teams organized voluntary



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player workouts during the lockout.

When Embree appointed his senior leader in charge of running the players-only drills, Hansen took it seriously, saying: "It's my job to get guys out here. It's my job to make sure things run smoothly and guys aren't messing around."

Hansen is the last player off the field. He brings the footballs and his own notebook.

"I'm responsible for holding guys accountable. If they aren't there, I'm going to get in their ear," he said. "But it's the summer, and everyone should feel free to have a good time."

Players are also determined to do more with their free time. Tight end Matt Bahr said he and running back Brian Lockridge go fishing up Boulder Canyon.

"How can you not have fun in Boulder in the summertime? You have beautiful weather, you got the mountains, you got fishing," Bahr said.

Some players work or have summer internships.

"They are the guys who aren't here," Harris said.

The ones who were present Tuesday broke the huddle with "Beat Hawaii."

Rams sign transfer LB. Colorado State added Kilgore (Texas) College transfer linebacker Cordarius Golston on Wednesday. The 6-foot-1, 215-pound newest Ram has three years of eligibility. He clock starts as a sophomore this season.

He initially signed with Arizona but transferred almost immediately when Wildcats coach Mark Stoops left for Florida State. Golston was a Texas top-100 recruit at Lancaster High School.

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Thursday, June 23, 2011

## Preseason position reviews: Running back

By Ted Miller

The Pac-12 features another strong crop of running backs -- five returning 1,000-yard rushers -- but there are also a few teams facing uncertainty at the position.

So how does it stack up?

### Great shape

- **Oregon:** It's not just that the Ducks have Heisman Trophy finalist and unanimous All-American [LaMichael James](#) coming back, it's that they have [Kenjon Barner](#) and [Lache Seastrunk](#) to help carry the load. When you toss in touted incoming freshman De'Anthony Thomas -- play or redshirt? -- Oregon may have the best backfield in the nation.
- **Washington:** [Chris Polk](#) is a workhorse who gained 1,415 yards last season -- he's also a good receiver -- and there's good depth with [Jesse Callier](#) and [Deontae Cooper](#), who sat out last year with a knee injury.
- **Stanford:** [Stepfan Taylor](#) lead the way with 1,137 yards and 15 touchdowns in 2010, but the depth is phenomenal with [Anthony Wilkerson](#), [Tyler Gaffney](#) and [Jeremy Stewart](#).
- **UCLA:** Not unlike Stanford, there's a returning 1,000-yard rusher -- [Johnathan Franklin](#) -- and great depth: [Derrick Coleman](#), [Malcolm Jones](#) and [Jordan James](#).
- **Colorado:** [Rodney Stewart](#), at 5-foot-6, 175 pounds, is a diminutive workhorse. He rushed for 1,318 yards and 10 touchdowns in 2010. The only issue here is depth, though redshirt freshman [Tony Jones](#) had a nice spring.



LaMichael James leads a talented running back corps that has both experience and depth.

### Good shape

- **Arizona State:** The Sun Devils lack an elite back but they have good depth and experience returning, topped by [Cameron Marshall](#) (787 yards and nine touchdowns in 2010) and [Deantre Lewis](#) (539 yards). There's also the versatile [Kyle Middlebrooks](#).
- **USC:** [Marc Tyler](#) rushed for 913 yards and nine touchdowns but [he's got some off-field issues](#). There's good talent on the depth chart behind him, though: [Curtis McNeal](#), [D.J. Morgan](#) and [Dillon Baxter](#). The O-line is a bigger issue for the running game.
- **Arizona:** [Keola Antolin](#) is a solid first option, if he can stay healthy, but the knee injury to [Greg Nwoko](#) means there's no experienced depth. [Daniel Jenkins](#) had some nice carries this spring, and expectations are high for incoming freshman Ka'Deem Carey.

### We'll see

- **California:** Strange to see Cal down here, eh? What in the name of J.J., Marshawn, Jahvid and Vereen is going on? [Isi Sofele](#) is No. 1 on the post-spring depth chart, but it's wide open after that, with incoming [freshmen expected to be immediately in the mix](#).
- **Oregon State:** The Beavers have experience with [Ryan McCants](#), but he's struggled to break through. Sophomore [Jovan Stevenson](#), redshirt freshman [Malcolm Marable](#) and grayshirt freshman Terron Ward are options, as is [Jordan Jenkins](#), who missed spring with a shoulder injury.
- **Utah:** The Utes lost their top three backs from 2010, and their top three backs heading into 2011 have no experience. But [John White](#), Harvey Langi and Thretton Palamo showed plenty of promise this spring. It's just we don't know what they'll do when the lights go on in Pac-12 play.
- **Washington State:** [Logwone Mitz](#) and [Carl Winston](#) are back -- they combined for 353 yards in 2010 -- and hopes

are high for Ricky Galvin, who was injured early in the Cougars opening game last fall. But this is not a position of strength for the Cougars.

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