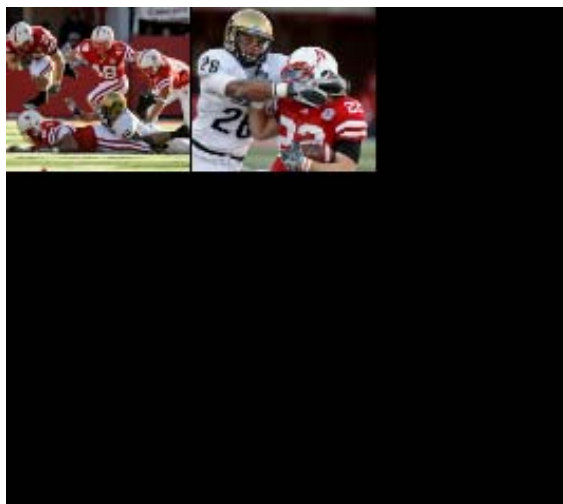


# Nebraska rolls over CU Buffs

## Colorado closes Big 12 eara with whimper

**By Kyle Ringo** Camera Sports Writer  
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 11/26/2010 04:50:58 PM MST



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LINCOLN, Neb. -- Colorado quarterback Cody Hawkins stood near the 15-yard line in the south end of Memorial Stadium on Friday afternoon surveying the field for the final time in his college football career.

There was no time left on the clock. The scoreboard read Nebraska 45, Colorado 17 and all of his teammates had passed by on the way to a losing locker room at the end of another losing season.

For just a moment, Hawkins looked toward the other end of the field where the Cornhuskers were celebrating another north division title in the Big 12 Conference by watching highlights of themselves along with 85,000 fans on the stadium jumbotron.

Then, on the day he became the all-time passing leader in CU history, Hawkins turned and walked into a tunnel, appropriately the last man off the field as was often the case following practices during his career.

The image was representative of the larger picture that emerged here on the day after Thanksgiving. Two proud programs with a rich history together going in opposite directions on the field and off it.

Nebraska is fully restored from the Bill Callahan era and pointing east toward a bright future in the Big Ten even as it heads south to try to throw dirt in the Big 12 eyes one final time by capturing a championship on its way out the door.

"We still have some unfinished business," Nebraska coach Bo Pelini said of winning the division. "That wasn't our main goal, but it was a goal we had to reach. It was part of the process."

The Buffs are headed west, home for the holidays once again and into the Pac-12 Conference next season with a lot of ground to make up in order to be competitive with the powerhouse programs there.

"In all reality, the Buffaloes just ran out of emotional gas," interim Colorado coach Brian Cabral said. "It's been a very emotional three weeks."

To give themselves a chance at a winning season, an opportunity to go to a bowl game and possibly keep their jobs, Colorado coaches had to find a way Friday to coax another monster game out of their offensive and defensive lines. And this time it had to happen on the road against a ranked opponent known for dominating the line of scrimmage.

The well ran dry.

"We had to win the game up front," Cabral said. "It had to come down to that."

CU managed only 262 yards of total offense and turned the ball over three times to make it even easier on the No. 16 Cornhuskers. Meanwhile, Nebraska rolled up 265 rushing yards without its best playmaker -- quarterback Taylor Martinez, who was out with a bad ankle.

Nebraska coaches used running back Rex Burkhead to fill Martinez's role in the running game and it worked well. Burkhead even threw a pair of touchdown passes when CU was under the impression he would run.

"He epitomizes what the program is all about," Pelini said of Burkhead's unselfish play.

The loss ended Colorado's season with a fifth consecutive losing record at 5-7 and no bowl game for the third straight year. It might also have hurt the chances of Cabral being hired on a permanent basis to lead the program into its future in the Pac-12 Conference.

"The respect that this team has for that man is unmatched," offensive lineman Ryan Miller said.

While the Buffs had looked like a different team in their first two outings under Cabral at home, there were no significant differences between the team that lost to Nebraska here and the one that was drubbed at Cal, Missouri and Oklahoma earlier in the season.

Colorado has now lost 16 consecutive true road games and 18 straight games played outside the state, dating back to Oct. 27, 2007. The Buffs' inability to play competitive football on a consistent basis away from home is an ugly fact the next coach will be challenged to fix.

The Buffs left the Big 12 with a whimper, losing 13 consecutive league road games. A program that was 16 games over .500 in conference play five years ago before Dan Hawkins was hired departs the Big 12 with a 60-60 all-time record in the league, meaning CU has been 16-games under .500 in conference games over the past five years.

Nebraska won 11 of the 15 games played in the series during the Big 12 years.

The Cornhuskers scored on the third play of the second quarter when Burkhead ran up the middle from two yards out to give his team a 10-0 lead. The Buffs drove 75 yards in nine plays but settled for a 22-yard field goal from Aric Goodman on their third possession of the game. Center Mike Ittis suffered a knee injury on the drive and did not return.

The Buffs appeared to stop Nebraska on a possession late in the first half on a third-down incomplection, but the Buffs were offsidess. Burkhead connected with Brandon Kinnie on a 26-yard touchdown pass two plays later. That play was the key as far as momentum was concerned because everything in the second half went Nebraska's way.

By the end of the first half, any momentum Colorado had brought to Memorial Stadium from its two consecutive wins over Iowa State and Kansas State was gone. The Buffs ran 22 plays in the first half and gained just 86 yards with most of that total coming on a scoring drive that ended in Goodman's field goal.

"They're the Blackshirt Defense for a reason," Miller said. "They're quick, they're fast and they make plays."

Colorado needed its leaders and best players to come through with big plays and that didn't happen for the most part. Fifth-year senior cornerbacks Jimmy Smith and Jalil Brown were both beaten for touchdowns. Hawkins threw two interceptions to negate the two touchdowns he tossed to Paul Richardson and Will Jefferson and didn't complete a pass that wasn't a trick play until the third quarter. Rodney Stewart never found consistent running room and finished with 88 yards.

The Buffs now await the name of their next head coach and more than a month of the pageantry of bowl season that they haven't been a part of now for much too long. After that, the long wait for next season follows before the dawn of new era and a chance to steer themselves in the right direction.

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colorado football

## Seniors put one last loss behind them

By Tom Kensler  
The Denver Post

Posted: 11/27/2010 01:00:00 AM MST

LINCOLN, Neb. — Colorado upperclassmen said Friday after the 45-17 loss to Nebraska that they believe the school's administration, including athletic director Mike Bohn, knows how they feel about interim coach Brian Cabral and the kind of head coach he would be for the Buffaloes.

However, no meeting between team leaders and Bohn is scheduled, the players said.

"We trust the (administration) to do the best thing for us," CU junior offensive guard Ryan Miller said. "Cabral has been phenomenal as an interim head coach. The passion that he has put in the past few weeks has just been phenomenal.

"And on top for however long (21 years) that he has been at Colorado, that man is unmatched. Coach Cabral has been a

wonderful leader and mentor."

Colorado's 16 outgoing seniors had pictured coming into Memorial Stadium and leaving with bowl eligibility. Instead, Nebraska did the celebrating.

Despite playing without two of its top offensive stars in freshman quarterback Taylor Martinez (ankle sprain) and senior wide receiver Niles Paul (foot fracture), Nebraska never trailed.

"I think last week against Texas A&M (a 9-6 Nebraska loss in College Station) definitely put a fire under them," CU senior linebacker B.J. Beatty said. "I tip my hat to them. Their O-line, tight ends, running backs . . . they brought it today.

"It's rough to go out like that, that's for sure," Beatty said when asked about how the Buff seniors felt as they completed their college careers. "I've been with these guys for five years. I don't think there is anybody tougher than the guys that have been with me. We've been through so much. We've battled and stuck it out. Never once did we ever think of quitting. Never once with our backs against the wall did we just curl up."

At least there were some statistical highlights. With a 29-yard touchdown pass to Will Jefferson on the last play of the third quarter, senior quarterback Cody Hawkins became Colorado's all-time leader in career passing yardage with 7,387. That touchdown to Jefferson gave Hawkins 141 yards. He needed 130 to pass Joel Klatt's mark.

Hawkins did not participate in media interviews

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after the game.

Tom Kensler: 303-954-1280 or  
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Hawkins' best friend on the team, senior wide receiver Scotty Mc-Knight, finished his career without missing a game and catching at least one pass in each one. However, he needed just 30 yards Friday to set the school's all-time receiving record but finished Friday with just 10 yards on three catches.

"There's no bowl game this time, and that definitely stings," Beatty said.

Colorado's offense, which had scored at least 34 points in each of the previous three games, couldn't gain any traction against the Cornhuskers. CU finished with just 12 first downs and 262 yards of offense.

Hawkins went 1-for-8 passing in the first half and did not complete a pass to a wide receiver until he hit McKnight with 9:13 remaining in the third quarter.

One of the first orders of business for the next Colorado coach will be to get the team to believe it can win on the road. The loss Friday extended Colorado's road woes to 18 consecutive losses in games outside the state of Colorado.

The Buffs, heading next year to the Pac-12, lost their last 13 Big 12 road games.

"I think we're the same team (on the road)," Miller said. "But we make more plays at home. I'm sure (a lack of confidence) plays a part of it."

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Posted on Fri, Nov. 26, 2010

## Recap: Nebraska vs. Colorado

By Sports Network  
The Sports Network

Rex Burkhead accounted for three touchdowns -- one rushing and two passing -- as No. 16 Nebraska punched its ticket to the Big 12 Championship game with a 45-17 victory over Colorado.

Burkhead rushed for 101 yards and a touchdown on 19 carries and also threw two touchdown passes totaling 30 yards for Nebraska (10-2, 6-2 Big 12), which will head to the Big Ten following this season.

Cody Green, who started in place of injured quarterback Taylor Martinez, threw for 80 yards and two touchdowns on 10-of-13 passing and also scored one rushing touchdown in the victory.

Cody Hawkins threw for 163 yards and two touchdowns on 10-of-26 passing, but was intercepted twice for Colorado (5-7, 2-6), which needed a win to become bowl eligible.

"My hat is off to the Nebraska Cornhuskers," said Colorado head coach Brian Cabral. "They outplayed us. They made more plays and we didn't.

"We didn't make the plays we needed to make, so my hat is off. They rebounded from their loss in great fashion. My hat is off to them."

Paul Richardson caught two passes for 62 yards and a score and Will Jefferson tallied a receiving touchdown for the Buffaloes, who will make the move to the newly expanded Pac-10 conference next season.

Nebraska led 38-17 entering the fourth and was forced to punt on its opening possession. The Cornhuskers got the ball back on the following play as Colorado's Scotty Knight was stripped on a short-yardage pass that DeJon Gomez returned to the Buffaloes' three-yard line.

Green got his rushing score two plays later, taking the keeper between the tackles at 12:55 to account for the game's final score.

Nebraska opened the scoring with an Alex Henery 42-yard field goal with 5:13 left in the first.

Continuing a drive from the end of the first quarter, the Nebraska offense added a Burkhead two-yard score at 13:47 in the second to jump out to a 10-0 advantage.

Colorado got on the board with an Aric Goodman 22-yard field goal on its following drive.

With 49 seconds left in the half Nebraska extended its lead to 17-3 when, after taking a pitch from Green, Burkhead hit Brandon Kinnie in stride down the right sideline for a 26-yard touchdown.

"Nothing Rex does surprises me," said Nebraska head coach Bo Pelini. "He's a tremendous football player, tremendous kid...They ought to put his picture next to football player in the dictionary because he just does so many things to help you and he's a tremendous kid, tremendous individual. He epitomizes what this program is all about."

Burkhead, who is traditionally a running back, saw multiple opportunities in the Wildcat offense throughout the game.

Colorado received the second half kickoff and on the third play of the first drive Hawkins was picked off by Gomez, giving Nebraska the ball back at the Buffaloes' 43.

After working the ball down to the Colorado 16, Kinnie grabbed his second touchdown of the game, this time off Green's 16-yard pass, to put Nebraska up 24-3, just inside 12 minutes.

Like clockwork, Hawkins threw another pick on the second play of the following drive that Eric Hagg brought back to the Colorado four. On the next play, Burkhead took the direct snap and after running to the right side, cut back to his left. While heading for the sideline he threw a short pass to Kyler Reed in the end zone to put the Huskers up 31-3.

The Buffaloes stopped the Huskers' highlight reel as they added a 50-yard Hawkins-to-Richardson touchdown that pulled them within 31-10 with 8:19 left in the third.

Colorado attempted an onside kick, but the ball bounced out of bounds. Green added his second passing score of the game nine plays later when he hit Reed for a one-yard dump pass.

Colorado was driving in the final minutes of the quarter and Hawkins hit Will Jefferson for a 29-yard score as time expired to cut the deficit to 38-17 heading to the fourth.

#### Game Notes

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# Cody Hawkins passes Joel Klatt in CU record books

## Quarterback leaves as career passing leader

**By Joshua Linden**stein Camera Sports Writer  
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 11/26/2010 08:31:19 PM MST

LINCOLN, Neb. -- With a 29-yard strike down the sideline to Will Jefferson on the last play of the third quarter Friday, Cody Hawkins became the Colorado Buffaloes' career passing leader.

The record was likely little consolation to him or the rest of the team after a 45-17 loss to Nebraska at Memorial Stadium.

In some respects, Hawkins' final performance as a Buff was a microcosm of his career at CU. There were ups and downs. And several of his 163 yards passing came after the Buffs had dug a hole and found themselves playing catchup.

Needing 130 yards passing to supplant Joel Klatt (7,375) atop the all-time chart at CU, Hawkins finished his career with 7,409. He also passed Klatt for the pass completions record with 667, beating the old record by one.

"Cody's been an unbelievable teammate. That's the biggest thing," CU senior wide receiver Scotty McKnight said of Hawkins' legacy as a Buff. "He took a lot of shots both on and off the field. But he always had the team's best interest (at heart)."

Hawkins, who wasn't made available to media after the game, completed 10 of 26 passes Friday. He threw two touchdown passes and two interceptions.

After racking up big yardage on the ground the last three weeks, the Buffs were shut down Friday, gaining only 61 yards in the first half when the game was still close.

The passing game didn't do much to stop Nebraska from loading the box either. Hawkins went 1 for 8 in the first half for 25 yards. The completion came on a trick play in which he handed off to Rodney Stewart, then got the ball back on a lateral and fired downfield to Luke Walters.

That play helped set up CU's first score, a 22-yard field goal by Aric Goodman.

"We had to win the game up front," CU interim coach Brian Cabral said. "It had to come down to that. My hat's off to the Blackshirts."

With CU trailing 17-3 to start the second half, Hawkins was intercepted by NU linebacker DeJon Gomes on the third play of the third quarter after a high throw went off the hands of receiver Paul Richardson.

Nebraska added a touchdown five plays later.

Hawkins was picked off again on CU's next drive on a ball deflected at the line of scrimmage. The ensuing Husker touchdown made it 31-3.

Hawkins finally found his rhythm on the next drive, completing three passes in a row and capping the possession with a 50-yard bomb to Richardson to make it 31-10.

After another Nebraska score, Hawkins did his best to keep the Buffs within striking distance with the TD pass to Jefferson. But by then the yards were having little impact on the outcome despite the record-setting day.

"You can ask anyone in this locker room," said McKnight, who leaves CU with most of the school's receiving records. "He's always there to support everyone, to be a role model, to be a leader, everything you'd want in a quarterback and a teammate."

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## Nebraska finishes off CU's Big 12 stay with a 45-17 thumping

By John Henderson  
The Denver Post

Posted: 11/27/2010 01:00:00 AM MST

Updated: 11/27/2010 10:06:14 AM MST

LINCOLN, Neb. — You can change the coach. You can change the stakes. For the Colorado Buffaloes, when they're on the road, it's all so much hotel window dressing.

On any given weekend, when the Buffaloes come down to sea level, they just keep going.

Interim coach Brian Cabral couldn't continue his magic from the past two weeks as the Buffaloes continued a five-year road malaise, getting crushed at 16th-ranked Nebraska on Friday, 45-17.

The subplot surrounding Cabral was as big as the game. He could very well have taken the inside track on the permanent job if he had ended the Buffaloes' 17-game losing streak outside the

state of Colorado and put them in a bowl game.

Instead, the 21-year assistant and

former Buff linebacker couldn't reverse a trend that saw the Buffaloes (5-7, 2-6 Big 12) win only two games outside the state since Dan Hawkins' ill-fated era began five years ago.

Cabral will fall back in the field of candidates behind front-line contenders Troy Calhoun of Air Force and Louisiana State's Les Miles, a longshot for CU to be able to lure away from a high-profile post. However, Friday's loss won't look good on Cabral's resume. Afterward, he sounded as if he knew it.

"Would I like to be the next head coach? Yes," Cabral said. "But that's not up to me. What this game does and what this game means for that, I don't know. But I just had a wonderful ride these last three weeks. Doggone it, for a Buff to sit in that seat for three games?

"I had the best seat in the house."

His only good view of this game was knowing that this series, which began in 1898, will finally end, barring future nonconference matchups. Colorado probably hopes it doesn't see a defense as ferocious as Nebraska's next year in the Pac-12. Nebraska, no doubt, hopes Indiana and Minnesota in the Big Ten are as big of pushovers as Colorado was Friday.

Colorado didn't put up much of a fight. The stage was perfect for a dramatic, fairy-tale ending for

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the Buffaloes and Cabral.

The Cornhuskers (10-2, 6-2) missed dynamic freshman quarterback Taylor Martinez, sitting out with a sprained ankle and in coach Bo Pelini's doghouse for calling his dad during last Saturday's 9-6 pratfall at Texas A&M. The Huskers also missed leading receiver Niles Paul, out with a broken foot, and had been reeling offensively.

With sophomore quarterback Cody Green starting, Nebraska ushered Colorado out of the Big 12 by going back to Nebraska football of old and winning the Big 12 North.

Tailback Rex Burkhead rushed for 101 yards and Roy Helu Jr. added another 77 as the Cornhuskers pounded Colorado into submission, gaining 265 yards on the ground.

"In all reality, the Buffaloes just ran out of emotional gas," Cabral said. "It's been a very emotional three weeks."

Burkhead, running often from the wildcat formation, had 98 yards and a touchdown and threw a halfback pass for another score as Nebraska took a 17-3 halftime lead.

Call it greater depth. Call it greater resolve. But Nebraska was greater, period.

"They have so many weapons," senior CU linebacker B.J. Beatty said. "We couldn't go to sleep thinking Martinez was out. They had guys good enough to compensate."

Colorado's rejuvenated offense under Cabral stalled against the ninth-ranked defense in the country. Safety DeJon Gomes intercepted a Cody Hawkins pass on the first drive of the second half and Nebraska drove 43 yards for a score. Cornerback Jimmy Smith bit on a pump fake and Green found Brandon Kinnie for his second TD reception of the game and a 24-3 lead.

Hawkins finished a dismal 10-of-26 with two TDs and two interceptions, but his 163 yards made him the school's all-time leading passer. It was a small consolation for a senior class whose entire bowl game memory consists of one cold night in Shreveport, La., and the 2007 Independence Bowl.

"It's just life," said senior Scotty McKnight, who finished his career catching a pass in all 48 games in which he played, an active NCAA best. "There are things you have to deal with that aren't always great. But then I look back on it, even though there were a lot of tough times playing here, I wouldn't take it back for anything."

Yes, it's the end of an era, not only for Colorado and the Big 12 but Colorado and this coaching staff. The Buffaloes can contemplate their past and their future together the entire month of December.

Again.

*John Henderson: 303-954-1299 or [jhenderson@denverpost.com](mailto:jhenderson@denverpost.com)*

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## Key stat

60-60: Colorado's all-time Big 12 record. It went 16 games above .500 the first 10 years and 16 games under .500 the last five.

## Key play

Nebraska RB Rex Burkhead's 26-yard halfback pass to Brandon Kinnie with 49 seconds left in the first half. Instead of trailing 10-3 and getting the ball to open the third quarter, Colorado trailed 17-3 at halftime and never recovered. Burkhead, who played QB at Plano (Texas) High, also threw a 4-yard TD pass to Kyler Reed to make it 31-3 in the third quarter.

## Three questions for CU

### 1. Will Colorado junior tailback Rodney Stewart find enough holes to continue his amazing string and have another big day?

Against a big Nebraska defensive line, Stewart had to fight for his yards. He had a decent day, including 61 yards in the first half. But Colorado needed a dominant effort from its ground game and that didn't happen.

### 2. Will CU's defense do a better job of playing against the zone-read option than it did against Baylor?

As it turned out, Nebraska freshman QB sensation Taylor Martinez (ankle) did not play, so the Huskers did not run a lot of zone read with backup QB Cody Green. But everything else seemed to work quite well, including direct snaps to I-back Rex Burkhead out of a wildcat formation.

### 3. Can Colorado's special teams come close to matching Nebraska dual threat Alex Henery?

Once Nebraska jumped out to a three-touchdown lead, it didn't seem to matter. But Henery made a statement early by kicking a 42-yard field goal in the first quarter into the teeth of a strong wind.

*Tom Kensler, The Denver Post*

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