



Offensive coordinator Eric Kiesau is still smarting over CU's 26-0 loss at Missouri.
Photo Courtesy: CUBuffs.com



10/15/2010 B.G. Brooks, Contributing Editor

Brooks: Buffs Have Point(s) To Prove Against Bears

BOULDER - For an offensive coordinator, being shut out is an all-time Top 5 downer, ranking just before or just behind root canals, food poisoning and encounters with the IRS. (Probably before.)

Until Saturday night at Missouri, Colorado OC Eric Kiesau had never been shut out. "*Never*," he said - and if you're thinking, OK, his answer only includes his season and a half in that role with the Buffs, you're wrong.

"I've *never* been shutout," Kiesau repeated - and that takes in coaching stops at Glendale (Ariz.) Community College, Oregon, Utah State, California and CU.

But the scoreboard at Mizzou's Faurot Field read: MU 26, CU 0.

The Buffs offense came up empty, pointless and at times flirting with hopeless as he choked down

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his first goose egg, leaving Kiesau a week to deal with the nasty aftertaste before CU lines up Saturday night against Baylor (5 p.m., FCS, Folsom Field).

Kiesau related a story from a former boss who told him of being held scoreless several years ago, saying "it's the worst feeling ever" in football. Until Saturday night, Kiesau might have had his doubts.

"Now, I have to agree with him," he said. "It is the worst feeling."

The question, then, is how do the Buffs spell relief? The obvious answer: P-O-I-N-T-S. The obvious follow-up: How do they get them?

Despite being held to 61 ground yards last weekend - a huge comedown from its previous two games - CU hasn't lost any confidence in its run game, Kiesau told me this week.

"No . . . none whatsoever," he said. "Really, from the 30 to the 30 we were doing OK moving the ball. We just for some reason stalled once we got down there (in the red zone).

"We just have to come out, get back to the run game and just keep playing. I've gone back and watched the red zone several times - actually the red zone of every game this year. I looked at what we did well and you'll probably see more of that on Saturday.

"We just have to get back to playing football and executing. That's just the big thing. I don't know why we had that lapse there, I really don't."

For him, the Missouri game was more frustrating than the 52-7 debacle at California in Week 2. There were a variety of reasons for him feeling that way, probably topped by the fact that the Missouri game was CU's Big 12 Conference opener and it came against a North Division opponent.

By bombing out with their Big Zero, the Buffs took an early step back in the North race and elevated their next two games - Texas Tech visits on Oct. 23 - to must-win status if they are to keep their season on track.

Most frustrating for Kiesau against MU was getting no points after being presented a fumble recovery by the CU defense at the Tigers' 13-yard line. Kiesau's offense went flat, then into reverse; a missed 40-yard field attempt euthanized that opportunity.

"There, if you score a touchdown, it's 12-7 and a different game," he said. "Honestly, the Missouri game ticks me off more than the Cal game. We had some plays we were very close on. We were literally one guy (being blocked) away from a 60-yard play on a screen pass. Again, when it's a close game, 12-0, you get a touchdown, create a little momentum and get right back into it."

The Buffs should find running opportunities against the Bears, who are seventh in the Big 12 in rushing defense, allowing 150.8 yards a game. Before MU, CU had rushed for 230-plus yards in its past two games. The ground game "lapse" in Columbia, as Kiesau called it, also squelched the play-action passing game and any "shots downfield" the Buffs might have attempted.

"It really didn't (present itself)," Kiesau said of throwing deep balls against the Tigers. "We called like four or five plays where there was a deep ball with a crosser coming underneath. They (MU)

were back on the deep ball, so we had to hit the crosser. Scotty (McKnight) got a couple of those. We were set up to do it, but we had to hit the intermediate guy and still were 18, 19 yards down the field."

Still, CU's receivers - supposedly a refurbished collection of playmakers - and quarterback Tyler Hansen are growing antsy in anticipation of long passes being called.

"We're so focused on the run game and controlling clock we haven't taken many shots (downfield)," Hansen said. "Maybe we should change up our tendencies a little because defenses are starting to - Missouri at least - figure us out a little bit. We're running the ball on first and second down, and on third down when it's third-and-eight, we're throwing the ball. That's kind of predictable. We've gotten into that a little bit; we need to change up the tendencies."

Hansen said Kiesau and passing game coordinator/receivers coach Robert Prince are receptive to suggestions, "And I trust them 100 percent. (Kiesau) is going to pick the right play to help us win. But we do need to change the tendencies a little to be successful."

Toney Clemons, whose 73-yard catch/run against Hawai'i is CU's longest play this season (and one of only two pass plays over 46 yards), said being a receiver, "I'm a pass catching guy and I love taking shots (downfield). I don't think we ever take enough shots. You could take 5-6-7-8 shots and to me that's not enough . . .

"I feel that if we don't take enough shots; (defenses) come in and storm our run game, which has been effective. But it comes down to the guys on the perimeter; if we're not taking shots you've got to take that personally as a receiver and go out every week in practice and prove that you're able to make those plays when they're called.

"But we've got to make plays - that's first and foremost always. We've got to execute the plays that are called and make plays when we have the chance. I felt like last game we lacked guys making plays on offense, and it showed up on the scoreboard. This week, we've got to refocus, go out there and make the most of every touch."

Hansen offered this advice to Clemons & Co.: "Stay focused, patient and confident. Right now they're a little frustrated with the amount of balls they're getting. It's hard because there's only one ball to go around and there's so many good receivers. We've got to do a better job of getting each one of them the ball in space."

But that might not happen if the running game limps through another 61-yard outing. Returning to the 230-run range would be a nice way to help expand the offense and keep the customers (and players) satisfied.

Baylor's most recent game was a point-fest against Texas Tech that saw the Bears outpointed 45-38. For an offense that is last in the Big 12 in scoring (18.2 points a game) and trying to rebound from a shutout, being forced into a shootout might not be advisable - but Clemons disagrees.

"Baylor has a lot of good athletes in the back half of their defense and in the front seven as well," he said. "Our defense is going to do a good job of slowing them down for us, and when they do that we've got to take advantage of all the field position we have - take shots and loosen these guys up so they can't sit in the box (load up against the run).

"If we do that we can put points up on these guys. They have a good defense; a lot of people don't realize that because they've played good teams like TCU (a 45-10 Baylor loss) and Texas Tech. But if we get in a shootout situation, a back-and-forth type game, we have the athletes to do that as well."

That's the word, anyway. Over the next two games, the Buffs will encounter a pair of teams that combined for 83 points last weekend. If Kiesau's offense is to rediscover itself, Saturday would be an opportune time. Once with no points is enough.

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SHOW MENU



CU Buffs hope home cooks up win

Colorado hosts Baylor in friendly Folsom confines

By Kyle Ringo Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 10/16/2010 12:26:10 AM MDT

Colorado backup quarterback Cody Hawkins spoke passionately after a loss last week at Missouri when asked about the Buffaloes' inability to win a road game in nearly three full years.

"I think it's so funny that everybody talks about the road," Hawkins said. "It's not like we've been kicking ass at home."

The senior co-captain is exactly right when looking at the Buffs over the long haul. They haven't won a lot of games anywhere, but they do enter tonight's game undefeated at Folsom Field so far this season.

And if there has been one thing you can count on from the Buffs under coach Dan Hawkins, it has been that they are generally more competitive at home in Boulder. Colorado has won 19 games in 4½ seasons under Dan Hawkins and 14 of them have come at home. Three others have come in neutral site confrontations with Colorado State just down the road in Denver.

It won't be a surprise if the bumbling Buffs of a week ago who couldn't score a point at Missouri look like a completely different team tonight. It has happened before. A more confident spirit seems to envelop them any time they don't have to get on a plane before a game.

"I think that it's that we just need to figure out how to play every game like it's at home," defensive end Josh Hartigan said. "We need to come out with the same intensity. I think it's a little bit different in that we are in our atmosphere, we know our field a little bit better, we know our fans. I think that kind of goes towards it, but there should be no excuse for playing any different on the road or at home."

They will need to be at their best playing host to a talented Baylor team, maybe the most talented Baylor team in the brief history of the Big 12 Conference anyway. The Bears are two games from bowl eligibility with six games to get there. They have not played in the postseason since 1995.

The Bears are led by quarterback Robert Griffin III, a third-year sophomore who is capable of scoring through the air or on the ground on any play from any point on the field. Griffin is coming off back-to-back 300-yard passing efforts, the first of his career. The Bears are averaging 34 points a game and often score with big plays.

Consider that just the Bears' top three receivers -- Kendall Wright, Terrance Williams and Josh Gordon -- have combined to out-produce the entire CU roster. The three Bears have 73 catches for 1,135 yards and 11 receiving touchdowns while 11 Buffs have 98 catches for 966 yards and only five scores. It should be noted that Baylor (4-2, 1-1) has played one more game than the Buffs (3-2, 0-1).

"He is extremely talented both ways, he's fun to watch," Dan Hawkins said of Griffin. "You guys saw, we played (former Iowa State quarterback) Seneca Wallace one year, and he's kind of that same sort of guy that you think 'Oh, this guy is a runner.' and then you put on the film and watch all the great throws he made. He is very talented and they've got a lot of good guys to give it to."

The Buffs will be trying to slow down the Bears without their leading tackler. Safety Anthony Perkins was lost for the season to a torn knee ligament last week at Missouri. He will be replaced by one of three freshmen.

Colorado also will break in a new running back this week. To compensate for another season-ending injury to tailback Brian Lockridge, coaches moved wide receiver Will Jefferson to tailback, where he is expected to spell starter Rodney Stewart at times. Jefferson was a high school running back.

"He runs angry," running backs coach Darian Hagan said. "He's a speed guy. So he can get the ball and take it to the house."

Colorado will also be trying to stop the bleeding from special teams units. The Buffs gave up two long kick returns two weeks ago against Georgia. Those mistakes and others before them earlier in the season foreshadowed a meltdown in the kicking game last week, when CU allowed a partially blocked punt, a blocked field goal and a fake punt for a first down.

Marcus Kirkwood will be the third place-kicker to be used this season when the Buffs need a field goal or extra point today. It will be the first playing time in a football game in Kirkwood's life. He is a former soccer player who walked on to the team in the middle of last season.

"We're just going to roll him in there and see how he does," Dan Hawkins said.

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Woelk: Time for Buffs to account for themselves

By Neill Woelk Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

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One week ago, Tyler Hansen wasn't happy when Colorado coaches yanked him late in the third quarter of a 26-0 loss to Missouri.

That's good. Hansen needs to be a little ticked off. He needs a chip on his shoulder.

Then he needs to step out on the Folsom Field turf tonight and prove it should never happen again.

Hansen has two choices against Baylor. He can either worry about what happened a week ago -- and stew that it might happen again -- or make it clear that Colorado's best chance of winning a football game is with him on the field.

Nobody's going to blame Hansen for looking over his shoulder. After all, that is the head coach's son over there on the sidelines wearing the headsets, waiting to come in should the offense sputter again.

But every time Hansen looks over his shoulder, he'll be taking his eyes off of what's ahead.

That's not exactly a good way to win football games.

What Hansen has to realize is that he has everything in front of him. A chance for a winning season, a chance at a bowl game and the chance to be part of a program turnaround are within his grasp.

And, if you want to extrapolate just a little here, there's also this: Hansen has the chance to enter spring ball next year as the lead-pipe-cinch, no-questions-asked incumbent -- no matter who the head coach is.

That's why he needs to keep his eyes dead ahead. If Hansen wants to head into his senior season with a little momentum, he has seven games left this year to seize it.

Actually, it wouldn't be a bad thing if every Buff started playing with a chip on his shoulder. The Buffs need to play tonight as if the visiting Bears are trying to steal their lunch -- or their season.

That's not much of an exaggeration.

The winner of tonight's game will be one step closer to a bowl game. The loser will suddenly be facing a rather stiff uphill climb.

The Bears are two wins away from becoming bowl eligible; the Buffs need three more.

But both teams also know their schedules don't get a heck of a lot easier from here on out. The Buffs still have home games with Texas Tech, Kansas State and Iowa State; plus road trips to Oklahoma, Kansas and Nebraska.

The Bears get Kansas State at

home next week, then close with road trips to Texas and Oklahoma State and home games with Texas A&M and Oklahoma.

Eliminate the games in which both teams will be major underdogs -- and suddenly, tonight's game is a major "swing" game for both.

There's no doubt the Bears are a dangerous team, in large part because of quarterback Robert Griffin III. Baylor's dual-threat QB has helped the Bears score at least 30 points in five of their six games this season. Only TCU's vaunted defense

has managed to contain him.

But from top to bottom, the Bears aren't any more talented than Georgia, a team the Buffs beat in Boulder two weeks ago.

Matter of fact, the Buffs may see only two more teams from this point on that will match Georgia in terms of pure athleticism.

The Buffs have proven they can play with such teams. But sooner or later, they have to put their roller-coaster ways behind them and engage in a little consistency.

Yes, when special teams play is as atrocious as it's been, the fault ultimately lies with the coaches. Ditto for penalties on the offensive line and unforced errors across the board.

But CU's players must also realize that if they want something special out of this season, it will be up to them.

Simply, they can take the easy way out and point fingers elsewhere for their problems -- or they can assume a level of accountability and create some success.

That's the choice Tyler Hansen -- and every other Buff on the field -- will have tonight.

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Bufs hope to contain Baylor's Griffin

Bears QB has thrown for almost 2,000 yards in six games this season

By Kyle Ringo Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 10/13/2010 11:56:47 PM MDT



quarterback Robert Griffin III and communism have nothing to do with one another except that opponents of both tend to use the same basic concept in trying to stop them. It's called containment.

It was the official foreign policy of the United States toward the philosophy in the second half of the 20th Century and it will be the policy of the Colorado defense this week when Griffin and the Bears visit Folsom Field on Saturday evening (5:10 p.m., Fox College Sports-Central) in a pivotal Big 12 Conference game for both teams.

The Big 12 just wasn't the same last season without Griffin. He missed most of the season after suffering a torn anterior cruciate ligament. Griffin opened eyes around the conference and the nation in 2008 when he played as a true freshman and threw for more than 2,000 yards and ran for 843 more while accounting for 28 touchdowns.

He's healthy again this season and playing as well as ever. At the halfway point of the season for the Bears -- they have played six games (4-2) while the Buffs have played five (3-2) -- Griffin already is approaching 2,000 yards passing and 300 yards rushing.

"Explosive, a very explosive offense," Colorado secondary coach Ashley Ambrose said. "That offense really thrives off of Robert Griffin. He does so much. He's a dynamic player. He's a fast guy who makes things happen. We've just got to keep this guy contained. ... Don't let him have long throws and long runs."

Colorado has never faced Griffin, a 6-foot-2, redshirt sophomore from Copperas Cove, Texas. The Buffs and Bears haven't played since the 2006 and 2007 seasons as part of the two-on, two-off scheduling system between the north and south divisions used in the Big 12.

Ambrose is a key part of the group of coaches and players hoping to slow down Griffin and a talented supporting cast. Griffin has five receivers with double-digit reception totals and three teammates who have carried the ball in the running game at least

20 times.

Compounding the challenge for Ambrose and the CU defense is the fact that the Buffs are without their leading tackler and will be for the rest of the season. Safety Anthony Perkins suffered the same fate this year that Griffin suffered last year. He tore his ACL last week at Missouri.

Perkins had made 38 total tackles so far this season before learning his season was over. Now it's up to Ambrose to pick from a slew of inexperienced freshmen to replace Perkins who had 18 starts and 29 games played to his credit.

The candidates are redshirt freshman Deji Olatoye, who moved to safety from cornerback earlier this year and true freshmen Jered Bell and Terrel Smith. Bell is the only one of those players who has logged any playing time on defense this season and the extent of his experience is one play in last week's loss.

"The thing about it is experience, playing experience," Ambrose said. "None of them have any besides Jered, who had what? One play last week."

Olatoye might be the most likely man to get the call on Saturday because he has one extra year of experience in the defense, even though most of it came at cornerback. Olatoye said he has been patiently learning from older players such as Perkins and waiting for his opportunity. It could come Saturday against one of the best playmakers in the college game.

"He's fast," Olatoye said of Griffin. "At first sight, you wouldn't think so, but then he gets out of that pocket and he can move really well. He's also a pretty good passer. He's a dual threat. It's going to be a tough game."

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Nothing to write home about for CU Buffs

Buffs back to Folsom to face Robert Griffin and Baylor

By Michael Krumholtz on October 16, 2010

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Following another ugly loss outside the Centennial State, Scotty McKnight is ready to come back to Folsom Field.

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“We love playing here – no question,” said McKnight after practice on Tuesday. “Not only because it’s our home stadium, but just the atmosphere around here. We can use it to get back on the right track.”

In the last three seasons, the Buffs are 0-13 away from home. Like a go-kart on the highway, this team looks over-matched on the road.

As a senior, McKnight has not won a game outside the state since his freshman year in 2007. That happened in Texas when they topped both Baylor and Texas Tech.

Oddly enough, the Buffs host those same two teams in consecutive weeks. There are two games which McKnight called “extremely important,” especially for his side of the ball.

“We know our defense will stand up to the challenge,” he said. “We just got to take that on our shoulders as an offense and put some points on the board.”

Points would be nice. In two losses, the Buffs were outscored 78-7. Both times the offense failed to eclipse 75 yards rushing while scoring a fifth of the time in the red zone.

Losing tailbacks Brian Lockridge to a season-ending injury and Justin Torres to homesickness open up the two spots behind Rodney Stewart. Coach Dan Hawkins said that sophomore receiver Will Jefferson will move in as the second-string back for now.

Jefferson, who played primarily running back in high school, admitted he’s more comfortable in that position.

“Receiver was something I learned,” he said. “Running back was something I’ve always done, so it’s going back to what is more natural.”

In the last two games at Folsom, Stewart and the backfield have run for a total of 487 yards.

If the team remains undefeated in the state but defeated out of state for the remainder of the season, they will still finish at 7-5 and qualify for a bowl game. Hawkins, who is now 2-22 on the road, would get to his second bowl game as CU's headman.

But would it be enough to save his job?

That's what makes this Saturday game against Baylor so important for their bowl chances. And it certainly will be no picnic when the 4-2 Bears come to Boulder.

Three years ago then-freshman Robert Griffin III did not delay his arrival into the college football scene by passing and running for a school-record 28 touchdowns.

Back then, he did it with his legs. Now he's doing all the work with his arm. Griffin may be on pace to rush for nearly half the yards he accumulated that season, but at this rate he will nearly double his touchdowns and yards through the air.

"You think 'oh this guy is a runner' and then you put on the film and watch all the great throws he made," Hawkins said. "And he is very talented and they've got a lot of good guys to give it to. I don't see any limitations on him. When he wants to go, he can go."

If Hawkins had Griffin at quarterback, there would probably be no need for him to shuffle his quarterbacks around. Son Cody replaced starter Tyler Hansen during the third quarter of the 26-0 loss to Missouri.

McKnight said he is "comfortable playing with both."

"[Tyler's] the starter – he's taken all the snaps [this week in practice]," McKnight said. "There is no controversy here with the quarterbacks. Tyler's the guy."

Hansen was accurate, completing over 70 percent of his balls, but his offense did nothing in the red-zone. One drive that started at Missouri's 13-yard line after a Buff turnover somehow ended up with zero points after negative yardage and a blocked field goal.

Just like in the loss to Cal, the inept offense put their defense on the spot. Though they gave up 24 points to Blaine Gabbert and Missouri (the other two came from a safety by the offense), they did well in forcing two turnovers and racking up four tackles for loss.

Rising junior Josh Hartigan tallied his third sack in two games, while also picking off Gabbert for his first career interception. Like McKnight, he said he cannot wait to play ball under the Flatirons.

When asked why his team does so poorly away from Boulder, Hartigan was frank in response.

"I don't have an answer," he said. "I think that we just need to figure out how to play every game like it's at home. We need to come out with the same intensity. But there should be no excuse for playing any different on the road or at home."

Hartigan will find it hard to get a fourth sack against the Bears' front five. Baylor is first in the Big 12, giving up only one sack per game.

But then again, he and his fellow teammates are coming back home to Colorado, where they have won four of their last five games.

After a loss reporters usually ask Coach Hawkins the same question: “Is this next week’s game a must-win?” Hawkins gave his usual response.

“We kind of look at every game like that,” Hawkins said. “Whether it’s the start of a season or on the road, or whatever it is, we try to scratch and claw every week to get one more point than the other team.”

The words came out slower than before as Hawkins talked with a tired look on his face. He answered a final question about the quarterback situation while looking straight ahead. Then he rose from his chair and walked away, doing it all without any visible energy left in him.

Kickoff for the Buffs-Bears showdown is scheduled for 5 p.m. Saturday at Folsom Field.

Contact CU Independent Football Reporter Michael Krumholtz at Michael.krumholtz@colorado.edu.

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colorado football

Bufs brace for Baylor QB Griffin

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

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BOULDER — This isn't exactly the best time for Colorado to break in a young and untested strong safety. Baylor's Robert Griffin III, the most dangerous quarterback in the Big 12, is coming to Folsom Field today.

"It's definitely not an easy task," said CU's Jered Bell, one of three freshmen competing to replace the injured Anthony Perkins as the new strong safety.

A third-year sophomore, Griffin is big (6-feet-2, 220 pounds), very fast (an Olympic-caliber hurdler) and can really pass (764 yards in just the past two games).

Questions?

"On film, Griffin looks electric," CU senior linebacker B.J. Beatty said. "That guy runs ridiculously fast. He can throw the rock too. He's elusive and really strong.

He's just going to be a double-edged sword."

How challenging will it be for Colorado's safeties and linebackers? Try keeping one eye trained on a receiver or running back and another eye on Griffin — at all times. That isn't exaggerating the mission by much.

"You've definitely got to peek around and look for him," CU free safety Ray Polk said.

Baylor (4-2, 1-1 Big 12) brings its best team in decades. Under enthusiastic third-year coach Art Briles, the Bears stand just two victories from becoming bowl-eligible and perhaps participating in postseason play for the first time since the 1994 Alamo Bowl.

The return of Griffin has turned Baylor's offense into one of the Big 12's most explosive units. He missed the last nine games of 2009 and received an injury redshirt after suffering a season-ending knee injury (ACL tear). All Griffin has done in two Big 12 games this season is set personal marks for passing yards, with 380 in a 55-7 slaughter of Kansas and 384 yards in a 45-38 loss to Texas Tech last weekend. He completed more than 70 percent of his passes in both games and was not intercepted in either.

Six Baylor players have receptions of 40 yards or longer. Wideout Josh Gordon took a Griffin pass 94 yards against Kansas.

"I think the game has slowed down for (Griffin)," Briles said this week. "I think that's probably the reason you're seeing him sit in the pocket a little more and do some things you might not have seen him do (in 2008) as a true freshman."



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Following loss, Buffs hope to rebound against Baylor

By Brian Howell
© 2010 Longmont Times-Call

BOULDER — About a month ago, the University of Colorado football team was answering questions about whether it could rebound from a 52-7 loss to Cal on the road.

The Buffs did, winning their next two games at home.

This week, following a 26-0 loss at Missouri, the Buffs fielded the same questions. They're hoping to respond the same way they did before.

Tonight, CU (3-2) hosts Baylor (4-2) at Folsom Field in the first of two straight home games.

"We definitely can (rebound)," linebacker B.J. Beatty said. "This team is too good to let something like this slide. The leadership on this team is too good."

As far as the Buffs are concerned, the loss at Missouri was just a disappointing game, not an indication that they aren't any good.

"We're 3-2; we're not like 1-3," cornerback Jimmy Smith said. "A lot of teams lost (last) week. We're not down in the dumps by any means. We'll come out and try to get a win. We're even more hungry."

CU has a good opportunity to get back on track. The Buffs typically have played well at home and are 3-0 in the state of Colorado this year. Win tonight and again Oct. 23 against Texas Tech, and the Buffs will be 5-2 for the first time since 2005.

Considering CU's struggles during the past five seasons, a 5-2 start to this season would be great. But head coach Dan Hawkins, whose job security likely depends on the success of the team this fall, wouldn't place extra importance on these next two games.

"We look at every game like that," he said. "You try to scratch and claw every week to get one more point than the other team."

Several players weren't so eager to downplay this stretch.

"(Today's game against Baylor) definitely is a must-win for us, not only for conference play, but for the team so we can get our confidence back," defensive end Josh Hartigan said.

He said last week's loss did nothing to kill the Buffs' goals for this season.

"We still want to win the Big 12. We still want to get to a bowl game. We still want to prove people wrong," Hartigan said. "Every goal we set in the beginning of the season is still on."

Senior Scotty McKnight echoed those comments but said the Buffs need to get a win against the Bears tonight.

“It starts this week,” he said. “Guys aren’t down. People realize we have a long season left.”

It will get even longer if the Buffs lose tonight.

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