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Buffs look to regroup after rout

By Brian Howell
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BERKELEY, Calif. — Following a win against Colorado State on Sept. 4, the University of Colorado football team said there was no time to celebrate. It was time to focus on the next game.

Following their 52-7 loss to Cal on Saturday, the Buffs said they need to do the same thing: move on and focus on the next game.

“Water under the bridge,” quarterback Tyler Hansen said. “Forget about it. Let’s go beat Hawaii now.”

“We’ll put it behind us,” running back Rodney Stewart said. “We’ve got to. We have a lot of football left.”

The Buffs wake up today with 10 games remaining on their schedule, starting this Saturday when Hawaii comes to Boulder. They also wake up a little confused as to how good — or bad — they really are this season.

With a roster full of experienced players and leaders throughout the lineup, CU believes it has a better team this year than it has had in recent years. The Buffs certainly didn’t prove that on Saturday.

“It’s real surprising,” receiver Toney Clemons said. “I didn’t expect us to come out here and come out so flat.”

How does a veteran team come out so flat?

“I honestly don’t know,” receiver Scotty McKnight said. “We have the players. We really do. We have talented guys. We just executed terribly, in all phases of the game. We didn’t all show up (Saturday) and we need to.”

With a couple breaks here and there early in the game, things might not have been so bad for the Buffs. But, the Buffs didn’t get those breaks — or do much to create them — and the game got away from them in a hurry.

“It’s embarrassing,” cornerback Jimmy Smith said. “We’re a better team than that. We still have high hopes, we just have to get through this one.”

As tough as it may be, the Buffs have to put the Cal game in their rear view mirror right away. Hawaii comes to Boulder on Saturday, and the Rainbow Warriors are sure to pay close attention to what Cal did to the Buffs.

“I guarantee they’re going to watch this film and they’re going to blitz us,” McKnight said. “They have a high, high scoring offense. Offensively, we have to manage the clock a little bit. We can’t go three-and-out and put their offense back on the field or they’re going to put up a ton of points. We have to be able to run the football in order to open up the passing game.”



The University of Colorado’s Rodney Stewart (5) bobbles a pass as California’s Kendrick Payne defends during the second half of their game Saturday in Berkeley, Calif. The pass was incomplete.

Ben Margot/AP

Right tackle Nate Solder added: "The way we rebound is this week we have to get better. All the little things we screwed up, we have to shore them up and start making the plays we can make."

In short, Saturday's game against Hawaii has to look a lot different than the Cal game did. And, the Buffs have a lot to do in order to make that happen.

"We need to come together as an entire team, and hit it on all cylinders or it's going to look like that again," McKnight added. "We have a ton of work to do. I knew we had a lot of work to do after the Colorado State game, even though we came away with a win. But I did not expect it to be like this. We just basically flat-out did not show up to play (against Cal)."

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THE DENVER POST

cu briefs

Bufs' struggles surprise WR Clemons

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Quarterback Tyler Hansen spent part of his Sunday receiving treatment in the medical room.

He took a couple of big hits in the loss to Cal, though he continued to play throughout the game. Bufs officials believe Hansen will be available for a full practice Tuesday.

Surprising struggle.

CU junior wide receiver Toney Clemons said the team's struggles on offense have surprised him.

"I'm not sure I can put my finger on it," Clemons said Saturday after the loss. "But I just know as a unit, our receivers and running backs, the skill position guys, have to make plays when given the opportunity."

Forcing things not the issue.

CU offensive coordinator Eric Kiesau said after the game he did not detect that Hansen was trying to play out of his realm in the loss at Cal,

even though Hansen had an interception returned for a touchdown when he tried to throw a pass with his left (nonthrowing) arm while trying to avoid a sack.

"I don't think Tyler was (trying to do) too much," Kiesau said. "The game was moving fast. He had to make reads and he had to make decisions very, very quick."

"I have to give credit to Cal's defense and their D-line. They played very hard."

Seats available.

About 10,000 tickets remain for Saturday's home game against Hawaii, which has been designated "Alfred Williams Day." The former CU great will be honored for his induction into the College Football Hall of Fame in December.

Adrian Dater and Tom Kensler, The Denver Post

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cu football

Day in 1925, it was not a bowl game.

CU Buffs eyeing ... The Warriors

Tom Kensler, The Denver Post

Posted: 09/13/2010 01:00:00 AM MDT

For the record: Hawaii (1-1) comes off a 31-28 victory Saturday at Army, winning on a field goal with 7.3 seconds remaining after forcing a fumble.

Who's hot: Hawaii junior quarterback Bryant Moniz. Playing after incurring a head injury the previous week against Southern Cal, Moniz threw for 343 yards and three touchdowns against Army. Through two games, he is 43-of-72 for 612 yards and four TDs.

Who's not: Hawaii's running game. Think Texas Tech during the Mike Leach era, although Hawaii is even more pass-happy. The Warriors netted just 10 yards on the ground against Army. Hawaii ranks 113th among NCAA FBS teams in rushing with 69.5 yards per game.

Key stat: Moniz completed 17 of his first 22 passes against Army, staking the Warriors to a 21-0 lead four minutes into the second quarter.

FYI: These football programs have not met since Jan. 1, 1925, in Honolulu, a 13-0 Hawaii victory that culminated the 1924 football season. Although the game was played on New Year's

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Cabral inspires CU's Hawaiian players

By Ryan Thorburn Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 09/12/2010 11:52:03 PM MDT

Today Brian Cabral is a kupuna, a respected elder.

But 36 years ago, the legendary Colorado linebacker and long-time assistant coach was just a wide-eyed kid from Kailua, Hawaii, trying to adjust to college life in Boulder.

"I think for every freshman it's the same, it's hard being away from home. The farther away you go from home, the harder it is," Cabral recalled during a recent interview with the Camera. "When people don't understand you when you're trying to speak your version of English, we call it Pidgin English, they don't know what you're saying. They don't understand you. The food is a little bit of an adjustment, the culture is a little bit of an adjustment. ...

"You feel like here in the main land you're on an island."

Cabral was able to adjust to his new surroundings under the Flatirons and began to thrive.

In 1976, he was a captain on CU's Big Eight championship team, finishing that memorable season with 13 tackles in the Orange Bowl against Ohio State. He graduated in 1978 and began a nine-year NFL career that included winning a Super Bowl in 1985 as a member of the Chicago Bears.

For many young Hawaiian males, Cabral inspires hope as they attempt to use football to realize their dreams.

"I'm an island guy that left the island to go to college. I'm an island guy that went on to the NFL," Cabral said. "I'm a kid that grew up on the beach and ultimately got to where every football player wants to get to."

On Saturday, CU will host Hawaii at Folsom Field. The Buffs will open up the 2011 season in a rematch with the Warriors at Aloha Stadium in Honolulu.

The series means a lot to Cabral, who has always recruited his home state very well and coached some great players from Hawaii, including recent Buff standout Jordon Dizon. The All-American linebacker, who is now a member of the Detroit Lions, used to say his No. 1 motivation at CU was "not to disappoint my (position) coach."

Cabral explains what the game of football means to players from Hawaii this way:

"Football on the islands is bigger than life. High school football, Pop Warner football, it's big. It's a very physical culture and that's why they love the game of football. ...

"We've brought the right guys to CU. They're physical players, they love contact, they love the game. That's why you recruit Polynesian kids, that's why you recruit Hawaii."

Rainbows to Warriors

Hawaii began playing football in 1920. Then called the Rainbows, the program completed back-to-back undefeated seasons in 1924-25, outscoring their opponents 606-29 -- including a 13-0 victory over CU on Jan. 1, 1925, in Honolulu -- during the 18-game span.

In 1935, Hawaii running back and future coach Thomas Kaulukukui became the program's first All-American. His No. 32 is the only retired number in the school's football history. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor during World War II, the Rainbows did not play from 1942-1945.

In 1955, a year after a 50-0 loss to Nebraska in Honolulu, the Rainbows traveled to Lincoln and upset the Huskers 6-0. In 1975, Aloha Stadium -- site of many NFL Pro Bowls -- was built and became Hawaii's new home field.

In 1992, Hawaii won a share of its first-ever WAC championship and also captured its first bowl game victory, a 27-17 triumph over Illinois in the Holiday Bowl.

"As long as I've played here or coached here we've never played Hawaii," said Cabral, who wore his lava lava wrap to celebrate his 300th game as a Buff last season during CU's 35-34 win over Texas A&M. "We've played in Hawaii for a bowl game, but we've never played Hawaii. That's a different challenge. Hawaii has a great history."

More recently, former Hawaii head coach June Jones (now at SMU) and quarterback Colt Brennan (NCAA career touchdown passes leader) led the Warriors to their first outright WAC title in 2007 and an appearance in the Jan. 1, 2008, Sugar Bowl, where they lost 41-10 to Georgia.

"In high school, I did start following the Warriors," said CU offensive lineman Sione Tau, who is from Honolulu. "The Warriors have been doing a lot of good things, so I'm pretty excited about the game, it's going to be awesome. First of all, to play against friends and old rivals from high school will make it a pretty exciting game. I've also heard lot of people from Hawaii are coming in for the game."

Hawaii opened up the season with a 49-36 loss to USC in Honolulu and pulled off a dramatic 31-28 victory on Saturday against Army, 4,995 miles away in West Point, N.Y.

With the WAC scheduled to lose Boise State, Fresno State and Nevada to the Mountain West, there is talk about Hawaii perhaps going independent in football as BYU will next season. Despite the fact that major programs are willing to make the trip to paradise, Cabral believes it would be tough for the Warriors to compete at a high level without a conference affiliation.

"I'm not sure about that. It's very difficult for them on the islands financially, although the support is very awesome," Cabral said. "Independently, I don't know the plusses and minuses. Hawaii is a hard place to live economically, it's a hard place educationally, it's even harder athletically on a football program."

Hawaii is scheduled to visit Boulder again in 2014 with the Buffs traveling back to Honolulu in 2015.

The next generation

Two of the Buffs' best defensive players this season, linebackers B.J. Beatty and Michael Sipili, are from Hawaii. They will see a lot of familiar faces on Saturday, considering the Warriors' 2010 roster includes 46 players from the Aloha State and a handful of others from American Samoa.

"For me and some of the guys from there, it's exciting. Back when I was home for the summer I was laughing because when I left I didn't think I'd ever play against anybody from home or anybody that I knew. It's going to be an exciting event for both teams," said Beatty, a senior from Kaawa, Hawaii. "I never really got into Hawaii football. When I went to high school I knew teammates and guys I competed against who went there, but I really never became a fan. But Hawaii football for the state is always a good thing. There are no professional sports out there, so that's what they always have to look forward to."

Beatty won two state championships at Kahuku High School. Chris Naeole, the former CU All-American offensive guard, is an uncle of Beatty's on his mother's side of the family. His father Byron played linebacker at Brigham Young in the late 1980s after a standout high school career on Oahu.

"It can get down to the wire. I've been in some games where my heart has probably stopped once or twice out there," Beatty said when asked about the atmosphere under the Friday night lights on the islands. "It's always pound the ball and big heavy dudes. The physical side, coaches never have to worry about us. We love to get physical. We love to come down here and hit each other head to head. It's always good fun."

Sipili, the Buffs' starting middle linebacker, ran into some serious off-field trouble early in his college career. He pleaded guilty to misdemeanor assault in 2007 for his involvement in an attack on another student and was sentenced to four days on a Boulder County Jail work crew, 80 hours of community service and two years of probation. CU's Office of Judicial Affairs suspended him from school for the fall semester that year.

Not surprisingly, Cabral didn't give up on Sipili, who has rewarded his coach by maturing. He will likely have an opportunity to play in the NFL after graduation.

"Coach Cabral helps so much. He is a big influence in my life," said Sipili, who grew up in Honolulu. "He has been a big help and support for the guys who come from the island. He makes it more comfortable for us to be here. ...

"He has always been by my side and he has always told me to take my mistakes head on and move forward. You can't do anything else but move forward."

Freshman outside linebacker Kaiwi Crabb, also from Honolulu, is the fourth current Buff from Hawaii. Even though CU's current head coach is on the hot seat after a miserable 52-7 loss to future Pac-10 foe Cal, Cabral -- who lettered three times for Bill Mallory and has worked for Bill McCartney, Rick Neuheisel, Gary Barnett and Dan Hawkins -- will likely be there to mentor Crabb throughout his collegiate career.

"I made the same trip, I took the same plane over the ocean and stepped onto the mountains. I understand the transition, I understand the culture, I understand where they're coming from," Cabral said. "That has been fun for me. One of the reasons why I do like bringing kids from Hawaii is to give them the same opportunities and experiences that I had. ...

"The neat thing about it is to see them get accustomed, to see them starting to thrive. The people like the island kids because they're colorful, they're fun loving, and the players on the team respond to that. To see that happen is a lot of fun for me to see."

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Somber Buffaloes focus on studying film

Coach Hawkins does not speak to media Sunday

By Kyle Ringo Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 09/12/2010 11:51:28 PM MDT

A somber mood filled the Dal Ward Center as players and coaches endured correct-and-review sessions Sunday from the 52-7 disaster at Cal on Saturday.

The Buffs had a spring in their step a week ago after beating Colorado State to start the season, but there was no sign of that optimism on the faces of players trying to put the loss to the Bears behind them.

Quarterback Tyler Hansen, who suffered a left knee contusion on a touchdown run in the third quarter Saturday, spent more than an hour with team athletic trainers before leaving without doing interviews. He is expected to practice this week and start the home opener Saturday against an explosive Hawaii team.

Coach Dan Hawkins also did not speak to the media as he and most of his offensive assistants watched film well into the evening.

The 45-point loss has brought back all the negativity that surrounded the program last season as well as questions from fed-up fans of when, not so much if, the coach will lose his job.

The Buffs are badly in need of a winning streak heading into the next two games over three weeks in which the pressure to win will be even greater than usual because of celebrations surrounding the games.

The school is celebrating former linebacker Alfred Williams' induction into the College Football Hall of Fame this week and will honor the entire 1990 national championship team with a weekend of events surrounding the Oct. 2 game Georgia, which is slated for national television.

Tailback Rodney Stewart was nursing aches and pains after a day in which he carried the ball 29 times for just 78 yards on the artificial turf surface at Memorial Stadium in Berkeley, Calif.

"I'm going to have to take care of my body and get ready for next week," Stewart said.

The Buffs ranked 113th in the nation in rushing in 2009 and aren't setting the world on fire with their running game so far this season either. Stewart struggled to identify what issues are preventing the Buffs from having more success.

One theory he proposed is that the playing calling might be too predictable.

"It's probably the formations we're in," he said. "They probably watched a little more film and they know what our run packages are and things like that. So they just key on it a little bit more."

Stewart said he wasn't necessarily disappointed with his performance at Cal because the Bears have a lot of talent on defense and are capable of stopping a lot of teams, he said.

Stewart described the mood around the Colorado programs this way:

"People are upset, but I think a loss is a loss, no matter if you lose by one point," he said. "It's just something we've got to come back from. Whether we win next week by one point or whatever. We've just got to win next week and just get over it."

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Colorado counts on altitude to keep Hawaii in check

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Sep 13, 2010

If the majestic flatirons of Green Mountain overlooking Boulder, Colo., don't take your breath away, then, as folks like to caution visitors, a short jog in the mile-high altitude definitely will.

Of course, when visiting football teams make the ascent to Folsom Field to play the University of Colorado, there are subtle, less scenic, reminders, too.

Like the metal tanks often strategically placed in the visitor's locker room with "oxygen" prominently printed on them. Purely in case of emergency, you understand, a CU official contends with a chuckle.

Welcome to 5,345 feet above sea level, as the Buffaloes like to remind opponents. Especially those from the flatlands, such as Saturday's opponent, the University of Hawaii.

When the old 16-team Western Athletic Conference fractured in 1998, the Rainbow Warriors thought they'd seen the last of their dreaded treks to the high country.

No more gulping for breaths in Laramie, Wyo., or feeling like your lungs were on fire at the Air Force Academy.

But with the beginning of a home-and-home series with the Buffaloes, the Warriors find themselves going beyond 4,600 feet for the first time in 14 years.

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School	Elevation	UH Record
Wyoming	7,200	3-5
Air Force	7,150	1-4
*Colorado	5,345	0-0
Denver	5,280	2-2
New Mexico	5,000	3-3
Colorado St.	4,800	2-6
Utah State	4,600	1-3
Brigham Young	4,553	0-8
Nevada	4,546	1-4
Utah	4,400	3-7

* Site of Saturday's game.

CU plays its home games at the third-highest elevation in major college football, trailing only Wyoming and Air Force. And, these days, the Buffaloes need every advantage they can muster.

National champions in 1990 and producers of a Heisman Trophy winner (Rashaan Salaam) in 1994, the Buffaloes have fallen on hard times, as Saturday's 52-7 blitz by Cal in Berkeley underlines.

CU, 1-1 at this point, hasn't had a winning season in

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four years. Its head coach, Dan Hawkins, is 17-34 over that period, unable to approach the success he had at Boise State and not likely to be around for the school's move into the Pac-10.

But in the brick confines of 53,613-seat Folsom Field, where they have one of the best homefield records in college football, winning more than two-thirds of their games, the Buffaloes remain a formidable force. As West Virginia, Nebraska and Oklahoma, all victims in recent seasons, will attest.

CU fans, for example, like to talk about the time No. 3 Nebraska had a 27-3 fourth-quarter lead, got gassed and, eventually found itself wheezing into overtime.

So concerned were the Mountaineers in coming from their 1,000-foot elevation two years ago that, legend has it, several of their offensive linemen spent time in WVU's hypoxico chamber to simulate high-altitude conditions.

Not that it helped much: CU upset the then-18th ranked Mountaineers 17-14.

"(Visiting) teams have tried it all," notes David Plati, CU's veteran sports information director, with a musement. "They've come in the day of the game, two days, three days... you name it. It has all been tried."

UH, which played Army at West Point on Saturday, arrived in Las Vegas (elevation 2,015 feet) yesterday and is scheduled to headquarter there until leaving for Colorado on Friday. UH head coach Greg McMackin, who was on the coaching staff of the Denver Gold in 1985, said without two weeks to acclimate to the altitude, the difference of a few days won't matter for the Warriors.

And, anyway, as CU likes to remind its visitors from down yonder, there will be oxygen standing by, just in case.

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