



Defensive tackle Conrad Obi initially committed to Georgia, but changed his mind after visiting CU.  
Photo Courtesy: CUBuffs.com



09/23/2010 B.G. Brooks, Contributing Editor

## Brooks: Buffs' Obi Has Georgia On His Mind - Again

**BOULDER** - Had it not been for a change of mind and his heart pushing him westward, Conrad Obi would be preparing to visit Boulder next week as a member of the Georgia Bulldogs.

Instead, he's preparing to welcome his older brother, Emmanuel, a UGA student who'll be making his first trip to Colorado to watch Conrad and the Colorado Buffaloes tangle with the Southeastern Conference team.

Obi, a junior defensive tackle whose hometown (Grayson) is about an hour away from the UGA campus in Athens, was verbally committed to Georgia for about a year before intuition told him to take another couple of visits before national letter-of-intent day in 2007.

Among the schools that had shown interest in him was CU. The newness of the Dan Hawkins era, the school's academic reputation, the lure of a faraway place . . . "It all made me want to give it a shot," Obi recalled. "I had some visits to take so I scheduled one out here and it really drew me in. I was excited, man."

Obi already had Bulldog friends and several - tailback Caleb King, offensive tackle Trinton Sturdivant, fullback Charles

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White, among others - remain on the squad that will play the Buffs on Saturday, Oct. 2 at Folsom Field (5 p.m., FSN).

Their presence, as well as his brother's first visit to the CU campus, give the game a special appeal for Obi. "We're trying to win every game, of course, but this one is real special," he said. "I've been waiting a real long time for this - at least three or four years, since I've known about it. It's so special even watching the film; I'm pumped up, ready to go."

Obi and his defensive teammates have watched tape of CU's 2006 visit to No. 9 Georgia - a gut-wrenching road trip for the Buffs that saw them surrender a final-minute touchdown and extra point to lose 14-13. Subbing for ineffective Matthew Stafford, the eventual No. 1 pick (Detroit) in the 2009 NFL Draft, redshirt freshman quarterback Joe Cox led Georgia's pair of scoring drives but ultimately lost the starting job to Stafford.

Watching the '06 CU-UGA game tape, Obi said, "It must have been heart-breaking for the guys here. I was a senior in high school at the time and still kind of neutral, although I'd been to a game (in Athens) a couple of weeks before."

The 6-foot-3 Obi reported to CU in 2007 weighing about 250 pounds and spent his first season at defensive end. Now just a shade under 300, he's moved inside and performed well enough in preseason to be included in D-line coach Romeo Bandison's regular inside rotation. In CU's three games, Obi has been in on 36 plays, recording a pair of tackles.

"I feel like I've stepped it up, but I'm still trying to step up more and be the player I need to be," he said. "It's a work in progress, but I know I can make it . . . I've got to keep working."

"Right now, it is what it is. I take my 'reps' and do what I can with them. I'm just trying to keep that positive energy on the D-line and get to the quarterback and stop the run, too. I know I need to improve in everything."

Obi plans to take his brother to the Buffalo Stampede the night before the Georgia game "and just show him around, show him where I've been living the last several years. He's never been out here, never visited me anywhere really. I'm looking forward to it and I know he is."

"But what I'm really looking forward to is the game. We had an awesome win (against Hawai'i) but we've got to keep it going."

**PUGH PRACTICING PATIENCE:** Makiri Pugh is even more familiar with Georgia's roster than Obi; he saw action in nine games for the Bulldogs in 2009 as a safety then transferred to CU in April. He's sitting out this season under NCAA transfer rules.

Pugh "knows a little bit" about Georgia's personnel, but not enough to be of great help to CU's coaches as they game plan for the Bulldogs.

"Our coaches are our game-planners; they've been doing this for a while," he said. "I don't think I'll be a difference maker; they'll see the film."

Pugh likes his new choice of colleges and the fact that he's back at corner - the position he played in high school (Independence, Charlotte, N.C.).

"I feel comfortable there, and it's nice to get the work at one position for an extended period," he said. "This whole thing has been a good fit for me."

The difficulty, though, has been watching this season.

"Definitely it is (difficult)," he said. "But my goal is to see the light at the end of the tunnel. I try to look at it like anything worth having, you've got to sacrifice for. It takes time. I'm hungry, but gaining patience."

"I've learned that there's no instant gratification. I could have gone to a DI-AA school and played right away but I really felt like it was better for me to come here, sit and work hard and earn a position."

**O-LINE UPDATE:** After two weeks of minor shuffling in the offensive line, Hawkins seemed fairly pleased with the work

of Mike Ittis at center and the return of Ethan Adkins to left guard last weekend. Ittis had started at that spot against California in the previous game.

"Mike played pretty well in there, Ethan stepped up," Hawkins said. "Obviously, our O-line - particularly in the second half (against Hawai'i) - was pretty dominating."

Hawkins also said first-year starter David Bakhtiari has "stepped up and played well . . . he's pretty consistent, strong, athletic and has kind of fended off a fierce battle with Bryce (Givens). We'd still like to have some opportunities to get Bryce back in the mix as well, but David's done a really good job."

Asked if personnel movement in the O-line appeared settled, Hawkins said, "I don't like anything to be settled . . . you've got to continue to play well, keep playing and give guys opportunities to earn shots."

**THIRD-AND-SO-WHAT?** Compared to previous seasons, CU has been a third-down machine in 2010. The Buffs have converted 23-of-45 third downs (51.1 percent), including a remarkable 10-of-14 in the 31-13 comeback against Hawai'i.

"We just did our jobs - that's the biggest thing," quarterback Tyler Hansen said. "Last year, we were horrible on third down (68-of-190, 35.8 percent). In the off-season we wanted to work on that, and I think we did . . . we emphasized the importance of it."

In the huddle, Hansen said he reemphasizes the weight the down carries and "when I'm walking to the line of scrimmage, I reemphasize it (to myself). Coach (Eric) Kiesau has told me to do it, so I'm just following my coaches."

Consistently converting third downs provides a lift to the offense as well as a blow to the defense, he said: "If the defense does their job on the first two downs, they make you play a third down. You get the third down and you kind of kill the morale of the defense . . . and if you can convert on third down, it gives you more confidence for the rest of the drive."

**BUFF BITS:** For the record, there was no head-butting last weekend involving Hawkins and one of his players. Rather, his nose came in contact with an inadvertent elbow during the Buffs' pregame entry onto Folsom Field. After the Hawai'i game, several players speculated about a head-butt and the story "got legs." After word of what actually happened trickled out over the next couple of days, Hawkins confirmed it Wednesday night on his weekly radio show. No harm, no foul, no head-butt . . . Georgia (1-2) plays at Mississippi State Saturday. CU (2-1) takes the day off before resuming work Sunday afternoon with a two-hour practice in full pads . . . The Bulldogs have used a pair of young quarterbacks in their first three games. Redshirt freshman Aaron Murray has started, but true freshman Hutson Mason also has played . . . CU's snake-bit nickel back position (the Buffs are on their fourth starter at the spot) is being manned this week by safety-turned-linebacker Patrick Mahnke, corner/safety Jonathan Hawkins and true freshman safety Terrel Smith, an initial redshirt candidate . . . Aside from losing nickel Paul Vigo for four to six weeks with a lower leg break, Hawkins has reported no major injuries this week. Several starters were given early week time off, but Hawkins said all would play if a game was scheduled on Saturday . . . CU is one of four Big 12 teams to have byes this week. The others: Oklahoma State, Texas Tech and Texas A&M . . . News of the Buffs' early entry into the Pac-10 Conference (2011 rather than 2012) wasn't lost on Hawkins, but his focus is elsewhere. He noted that the CU administration should be applauded for its work in getting that accomplished, but added, "We're just trying to get ready for Georgia."

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## CU and cornerback Jimmy Smith will try to stop Georgia star WR A.J. Green

By Chris Dempsey  
The Denver Post

Posted: 09/24/2010 01:00:00 AM MDT

BOULDER — Just Colorado's luck: The next time the Buffs step on the football field for a game will be the first time Georgia's all-world wide receiver A.J. Green gets to as well.

He's a top-10 NFL talent. CU cornerback Jimmy Smith and his teammates have already begun studying film, bracing for the challenge. Everyone else is interested to see how the Smith-Green matchup plays out, and that includes Smith's teammates.

"Totally," CU quarterback Tyler Hansen said. "I'll be on the sideline during the matchup, so I'll be watching it. I'm really excited, actually, about seeing A.J. Green. I've heard all of the good things about him. He's a good player. I'm anxious to see what Jimmy does against him."

Smith is a pretty highly regarded NFL prospect himself. And yet he downplays the matchup. In fact, he says stopping Green won't be an issue he deals with just by himself. He expects to match up against Green some, but also against other Georgia wideouts as well.

"I wouldn't say I'm focusing so much on him," Smith said. "There's other receivers that I have to face. I'm not really worried. I've got to go out and play my game no matter what. He's a great dude, and I know every time he comes over I've got to strap it up and be ready. But I'm not just like, 'I'm focusing on this guy' because I know I gotta face another wide receiver they have that's pretty good. He's tall, he's big and he can run routes. I have my hands full with both sides, whoever comes my way, the 'X' or the 'Z.' "

Green missed the first three games of the season because of an NCAA suspension for selling his 2009 Independence Bowl jersey for \$1,000 to Chris Hawkins, an ex-North Carolina defensive back who the NCAA says is an agent or a person who markets amateur athletes.

And Georgia has missed him. The Bulldogs have limped out to an 0-2 start in conference play, and a 1-2 record overall, with their only win coming against Louisiana-Lafayette. Georgia's passing offense averages just 212 yards a game going into this weekend's contest against Mississippi State, which ranks 63rd in the NCAA.

Green is the deep threat. After Georgia's loss to South Carolina, a relieved Gamecocks defensive coordinator Ellis Johnson said the Bulldogs clearly



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missed Green's ability to stretch the field. He told reporters: "That can change field position. He can change a game plan at times."

Smith is fifth on the Buffs in tackles (12) and tied for first in passes broken up (two). In addition to Smith's obvious coverage ability, Hansen notes he's a crafty cover corner as well.

"We'll have routes on the backside, and they say if you have it, take it," Hansen said. "And I'll look at it, and it looks good. But with Jimmy you know it's not going to be there. He's that good at recovering, deceptive; he's going to make it look like he's doing one thing and do the opposite. So, he plays with the quarterback's mind a lot. He's a little scary."

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john henderson

## Henderson: CU getting Buffaloed

By John Henderson  
The Denver Post

Posted: 09/24/2010 01:00:00 AM MDT

The first taste Colorado had of its new Pac-10 home came two weeks ago in Berkeley, Calif., and the Buffaloes are still spitting out bits of turf from every part of Memorial Stadium.

If the Buffs can get blown out 52-7 by a second-division Cal team whose true worth came through in its 52-31 loss to Nevada last week, what other troubles will Colorado face in 2011? No one can predict what will happen next weekend, let alone next year, but Colorado had better improve a lot or it'll be near the bottom of the conference. The Pac-10 is going to get better before it gets worse.

In a conference that produces NFL quarterbacks like bobblehead dolls, eight starting quarterbacks are scheduled to return next fall.

Here's a veeeeery early look at the 2011 Pac-10, from the best to Washington State:

Oregon: The main culprits who have helped the Ducks outscore three opponents 189-13 will be

around a long time. Quarterback Darron Thomas, who has made everyone forget Jeremiah Masoli; tailback LaMichael James, who's averaging 180.5 yards a game; and his backup, Kenjon Barner, who scored five TDs in the first 21 minutes against New Mexico, are all sophomores.

They might be vulnerable on defense, as nine starters depart.

Arizona: Quarterback Nick Foles is getting hyped by NFL draft pundits. He'll be a senior next year and must ask himself if he wants to return with four linemen gone. All-America cornerback Trevin Wade is only a junior.

Coach Mike Stoops is only making this team better. It has won eight games each of the last two years, is 3-0 and has only two difficult road tests, at Stanford and Oregon.

Stanford: If quarterback Andrew Luck doesn't win the Heisman this year, he can win it next year. He's only a junior and in 2011 could play himself into becoming the top quarterback in the draft.

He'll lose three linemen, but seven defensive starters return and, more importantly, so will coach Jim Harbaugh. In his four years, the Cardinal has gone from four wins to five to eight to No. 16 in the country.

Southern California: The NCAA-sanctioned 15 scholarships lost per year probably won't affect the Trojans — yet. They will still have plenty of Pete Carroll recruits to contend in 2011. Seven offensive starters will be back, including



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quarterback Matt Barkley.

Junior tailback Marc Tyler is finally healthy and they have a burgeoning star in offensive tackle Tyron Smith. Defensively, eight starters return, and three defensive backs are underclassmen.

Oregon State: Whirlwind tailback Jacquizz Rodgers is only a junior, and first-year starting quarterback Ryan Katz is a sophomore. They'll lose flanker James Rodgers, Jacquizz's brother, and must rebuild a defense.

Washington: Replacing Jake Locker will be one of two current freshmen: Keith Price out of Compton, Calif., or 6-foot-8 Michael Hartvigson. Capable tailback Chris Polk (88 yards per game) is a junior, and so is all-conference receiver Jermaine Kearse. But the Huskies' defense is still awful.

UCLA: Forget coach Rick Neuheisel's current quarterback problems. Waiting to enroll early is dual-threat phenom Brett Hundley, the No. 7 rated QB in the nation out of Chandler, Ariz. He already has his eye on starting next year.

And what a cast around him: seven starters back on offense and 10 on defense, including all-America linebacker Akeem Ayers.

California: Cal is currently the Buffaloes' second game of 2011. Replacing QB Kevin Riley will likely be junior-to-be Beau Sweeney, the nation's 13th-ranked pro-style QB in high school and grandson of long-time Fresno State coach Jim Sweeney.

And remember, receiver Keenan Allen is only a freshman.

Arizona State: If Dennis Erickson can survive this season — and the Sun Devils' 20-19 loss at Wisconsin on Saturday shows they may be better than we think — he'll be in good shape next year. He returns 10 starters on offense and defense.

Washington State: The only FBS teams the Cougars have beaten in Paul Wulff's three years are Washington and SMU. Does it really matter 15 starters return?

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SEPTEMBER 23, 2010, 7:36 PM

## Kudos to the CU defense? In this case, yes

By **CHRIS DEMPSEY** |  No Comments

You ever see a stat and wondered just how a certain team was in it, or what it really meant even though they were? This might be one of those moments. Saw a stat roll by on ESPN that listed the top six teams in opponent third-down percentage since 2009.

Guess who's number 5..

1. Boise State, 37.9 percent
2. Arizona St., 38.3
3. Texas, 39.3
4. Miami (FL), 40.2
5. Colorado, 40.5
6. Alabama, 41.7

Yep, that's Colorado. Ahead of Alabama, no less. But the fact is, this has been a strong point for the Buffs in recent years. Colorado is ninth in the nation in getting opposing offenses off the field on third down this season, allowing a conversion rate of just 23.5 percent (8-of-34) going into this weekend's games. They were 21st in the nation last season at 34.1 percent.

Well, now that that's apparently licked, about first and second down...

Chris Dempsey: [cdempsey@denverpost.com](mailto:cdempsey@denverpost.com)

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Longmont, Colorado  
Friday, September 24,  
2010

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## **Buffs back to basics**

*By Brian Howell*  
© 2010 Longmont Times-Call

BOULDER — Some key players for the University of Colorado football team are taking it easy this week.

Left tackle Nate Solder, senior receiver Scotty McKnight and others have been out of pads and not participating in some practices.

“We have guys nicked and we’re trying to get some of that stuff healed up,” head coach Dan Hawkins said. “If we had a game, they’d go, so it’s nothing major.”

This is a great week for healing up. At 2-1, the Buffs get a break from competition. Their next game is Oct. 2, when Georgia comes to Boulder.

“Yeah, it’s a good time for a bye week,” said Solder, who declined to disclose what is hurting him this week. “I think guys need to get their feet back under them, get rejuvenated, and start at the fundamentals again.”

Getting back to basics has been a big part of this week for the Buffs.

“That’s what coach Hawkins is stressing right now,” quarterback Tyler Hansen said. “He’s stressing the little things, the technique stuff and he’s really trying to get the redshirt guys and the third-stringers a lot more reps this week.”

Solder said the offensive line has spent a lot of time this week working on fundamentals.

“(The other linemen) have had a lot more individual time and we’ve just gone back through our basic stuff, which you always need,” he said. “That’s essential for every part of the game.”

While this is a good week to heal and review the basics, however, the Buffs aren’t necessarily taking a break. Georgia, despite being off to a 1-2 start, is traditionally one of the better teams in the country. So, the Buffs are spending a good portion of this week getting ready for the Bulldogs.

Asked how much of the Georgia game plan he’ll implement this week, Hawkins said, “A lot. We’ll get it all in there.”

Next week will mark Georgia’s first trip to Boulder. The teams have met only once, in Athens, Ga., on Sept. 23, 2006. Georgia scored late to escape with a 14-13 win.

In its history, Georgia has played just three games in current Big 12 towns — Stillwater, Okla.; Austin, Texas; and College Station, Texas. The Bulldogs are 0-3 in those games.

**EXCELLING ON THIRD DOWN:** So far, the Buffs’ offense has been much better at converting third downs than it was a year ago.

CU has converted 51.1 percent (23 of 45) of the time this year, compared to 35.8 (68 of 190) a year ago.

“Isn’t that the best stat ever?” Hansen said. “Last year, we were horrible on third down. In the offseason we wanted to work on that and I think we did that. We really emphasized the importance of third down.”

The Buffs’ defense has been better, too. A year ago, CU opponents converted 34.1 percent of third downs (58 of 170). This year, opponents have been successful just 23.5 percent of the time (eight of 34).

**UP AND DOWN:** Through three games, the CU offensive line has had a bit of a roller-coaster ride.

The Buffs played well up front against Colorado State, had a bad day against Cal and then picked up their game against Hawaii.

Solder believes the O-line is doing well to this point.

“Oh yeah, we’re better and we’re getting better,” he said. “It’s a never-ending process, I think.”

Brian Howell can be reached at [bhowell@times-call.com](mailto:bhowell@times-call.com). Read his Buffs blog at BOULDER — Some key players for the University of Colorado football team are taking it easy this week.

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# 1990 flashback: A look back at Colorado's comeback victory over Texas

Neill Woelk  
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 09/24/2010 12:00:17 AM MDT

**Editor's note:** *This is the fourth in a season-long series on Colorado's march to the 1990 national championship. The Camera will recap each week's game and catch up with a player from the title team every Friday during the 2010 season.*

Ask former Colorado coach Bill McCartney to offer up a defining moment of the 1990 season, and McCartney doesn't hesitate to answer.

Week 4 at Texas, late in the third quarter, Colorado trailing 19-14, Texas with the ball deep in CU territory -- and the Buffs' season in danger of slipping away for good.

"If they score, it's pretty much over," McCartney recalled recently. "I'm down on the sidelines at about the 20, as far as I can go. I'm trying to exhort the team, but truth is, we don't have much mustard left."

A loss would have emptied the bottle for good. After opening the season ranked No. 5 in the nation, the Buffs had stumbled to a 1-1-1 start, slipping to 20th in the polls. A loss at Texas was a sure ticket out of the rankings and a sub-.500 record for the first time at CU since midway through the 1986 season.

On a muggy night in Austin, such a fate seemed inevitable as a crowd of 77,273 screamed for the Longhorns to put the game out of reach.

"All of a sudden, I hear this disturbance on the sidelines," McCartney said. "I'm concentrating on what's happening on the field, but behind me there's this commotion. I look back and (Eric) Bieniemy has the offense huddled up and he's got the fire going. He's grabbing them, yelling, everything. He's got their attention."

At that moment, the third quarter ended with Texas facing a second-and-5 from the Buff 6-yard line.

"The Texas players run down to the other end of the field. They're excited. They have the momentum and can sense success," McCartney remembers. "Our guys are walking. They're spent. You can see it."

"All of a sudden, the offensive guys run onto the field and Bieniemy gets them all in a huddle. When they break up, our defensive guys start running to the other end. We have to hold them to a field goal -- and we do."

Suddenly, CU's epitaph was on hold. The Longhorns had a 22-14 lead, but the momentum had begun to shift.

"They kick off, and we score in seven plays," McCartney said. "Our guys had the juice going. The offense moved the ball and our defense was reinvigorated."

The score came on a 60-yard drive, sparked by a 21-yard run from George Hemingway and a 16-yard Darian Hagan pass to Mike Pritchard. Bieniemy closed the drive with a 4-yard run.

The Buffs still trailed, 22-20 (a 2-point conversion try failed), but Colorado clearly had steam on its side. CU forced a Texas three-and-out on its next possession, and following a big Dave McCloughan punt return, the Buffs marched 35 yards in seven plays to put the winning touchdown on the board.

Alfred Williams then closed the scoring by sacking Texas' Peter Gardere in the end zone for a safety and a 29-22 win.

"It was the turning point in our season," McCartney said. "From that point on, we never looked back."

Bieniemy finished with 99 yards rushing on 26 carries while Hemingway added 76 yards on seven carries, plus a 38-yard touchdown catch. Hagan completed seven passes for 160 yards and a touchdown.



Defensively, Chad Brown led the Buffs with 20 tackles, while Greg Biekert tacked on 13 stops and Williams had 12 with two sacks.

The Longhorns, meanwhile, finished with just 141 yards rushing and only 153 passing, with Gardere enduring four sacks.

"One thing we took great pride in was our run defense," Williams said recently. "Nobody was going to run the ball on us because we saw one of the best rushing attacks in the country every day in practice.

"But I still had some good sack numbers, even though we didn't see that many real passing offenses. When we got a chance to play against a passing team, we were giddy about the chance to actually rush the quarterback more than 10 or 12 times a game."

Four weeks into 1990, the 2-1-1 Buffs weren't where they thought they'd be in their pursuit of a national title.

But thanks to a stunning fourth-quarter rally at Texas, they were still in the hunt.

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## Q&A with Dave McCloughan

Neill Woelk  
Boulder Daily Camera

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*In 1990, Dave McCloughan took over the job of punt returns from Jeff Campbell, who had finished eighth in the nation in 1989 and was a "legend" in the eyes of CU fans. McCloughan more than filled Campbell's shoes, returning a punt 55 yards for a touchdown in his first game against Tennessee. McCloughan ended up leading the nation in punt returns, averaging 16.4 yards per attempt and adding another return for a touchdown -- a 90-yarder -- against Kansas. He also had 47 tackles and four interceptions as a starting cornerback, and was named to the coaches' All-Big Eight first team. McCloughan was a third-round pick of the Indianapolis Colts, and played four years in the NFL. He now works as an NFL scout.*

**Q: What do you remember about the week following CU's loss to Illinois and the buildup to the Texas game, which many people were saying was a make-or-break game for the Buffs?**

A: After we started out 1-1-1, we had a players-only meeting. Kanavis (McGhee) led it, and he and a couple other guys did most of the talking. We got our heads screwed on straight right there and got it going in the right direction. That was probably the turning point -- we knew everything was going to hinge on that Texas game.

**Q: Was there anything memorable said in that meeting?**

A: I think we had some guys at that point that might have been partying a little during the week and not paying attention to everything we needed to do to win. I remember Kanavis saying, 'That's over. We're gonna buckle down and play football.' Everybody pretty much listened to that.

**Q: You had some big punt returns during the season, including a long one against Texas that put CU in position for the winning touchdown. What do you remember about taking over as punt returner?**

A: I remember Tennessee was the first time I'd ever handled it by myself and I ran one back for a touchdown. I was just trying to do the best I could do, ran a couple of angles and got into the end zone. We had some great special teams then and really used them to our advantage.

**Q: Which was better -- the 1989 team or 1990 team?**

A: That was really two different deals. The year before (1989), we were really good because we came together because of Sal (Aunese). Everything was just so easy, and we kept rolling. That next year, though, we played the toughest schedule in the nation and we had to keep fighting every week. We knew good things would happen, but it wasn't easy. It's hard to compare them.

**Q: What do you remember about Bill McCartney's motivational speeches?**

A: They were always Thursday night, and he'd always have some kind of angle. You'd think you'd heard it all, but you'd come out of that meeting ready to go, no matter who you were playing. The thing about Mac was that he could talk you into doing anything. He'd get you ready to play.

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## CU football players battle stereotypes, racism

Student athletes comment on their experiences on and off the field

By Neda Habibi on September 23, 2010

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B.J. Beatty is no stranger to remarks made about his long, red hair.

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"I love my long red hair, obviously, I have it out all the time," Beatty said. "It's one of my trademarks. I love having it. When guys make fun of the whole redhead thing, I'll calmly, but at the same time, let them know how serious I am about it and say something."

Beatty, a 22-year-old senior ethnic studies major and outside linebacker for the CU football team, said he was born and raised in Hawaii. He often gets responses of shock and confusion when he tells inquiring students at CU that he is 60 percent Polynesian because, as he said, he appears white.

While most students spend a majority of their time focusing solely on school and social endeavors, students like Beatty have athletics as an added responsibility.

As such, some of them sometimes must deal with the stereotypes that come along with being an athlete at a university where, according to the [United States Department of Education](#), 78 percent of undergraduates are white.

While the jokes about his hair bother him, he said the questions and confusion surrounding his ethnicity have been an ongoing source of aggravation.

"I've gotten California, Texas, I've gotten Idaho, Iowa," Beatty said. "I've gotten, 'I thought all Polynesians were dark and bigger.'"

It is perhaps because of the relative lack of diversity at CU that some of students feel that they are sometimes regarded solely as "the athlete."

Anthony Perkins, a 21-year-old senior double majoring in integrative physiology and business administration, who plays safety for the CU football team, said that often, the prevailing viewpoint regarding female and male CU students of color is that he or she is an athlete.



Senior linebacker B.J. Beatty stands out not only due to his trademark red hair but also for his fierce, energetic play on the field. (CU Independent/Patrick Ghidossi)

"I think that CU, as a school, is predominantly a white school and that's definitely something you notice," Perkins said. "When you see someone else that's black or not white, automatically, your first instinct is he must be an athlete, or she must be an athlete, and that's something that's not ideal. I feel that there are some preconceived ideas that people do get in their head."



Senior safety Anthony Perkins had 6 total tackles and a fumble recovery in CU's 31-13 win over Hawaii on Saturday, Sept. 18. Perkins has begun to play a larger role in the Buffaloes' defense. (CU Independent/Patrick Ghidossi)

Kendrick Celestine, a 22-year-old junior sociology and ethnic studies major, who plays wide receiver, said he is also often frustrated by the athlete stereotype.

"The only thing that really gets to me, like me being on the team, is that, let's say I meet somebody on campus and they don't even know me but they'll look at me and be like, 'basketball player? Football player?'" Celestine said. "Why do I have to be that guy?"

Despite this, Celestine said his experience at CU has been a positive one. The wide receiver said that his coaches and teammates both played big parts in making him enjoy his time as a student.

As a freshman, Celestine recalls what were called "accountability groups," in which groups of 15 teammates were assigned to a member of the coaching staff to have dinners and hold discussions about more than just football.

"We used to go to the coach's houses, and we used to have dinner," Celestine said. "And they also grouped us up in like accountability groups of 15, and we just talked about life. We would each have a coach or staff and hold a meeting. We would just bring up a subject and talk about it, sometimes giving a summary of how we grew up and getting to know one another on a more personal level."

Celestine said that his experience at CU with football is vastly different from that of his sports experiences at his high school in Mamou, La., at which he was very much accustomed to racial slurs from both opponents and crowds.

"It was an all-black high school so when we played private all-white schools, oh my God, those games, it was like, where I grew up, it was like living on a plantation, or something," he said. "It was racial slur after racial slur."

During his application process to the football team at CU, Celestine said that he had to modify his highlight film because of all the resounding racial slurs directed at him from the crowds at his high school football games.

"On my highlight film, what I had to send here, I had to mute the volume on the game because I was listening, and I just heard 'don't throw the ball to that n—', so I had to go back and redo the highlights and mute it so you couldn't hear anything," Celestine said.

Fortunately, Celestine has had far better experiences with his sports career at CU Boulder.

"It's a different life out here," he said. "To be honest with you, my experience moving out here is probably one of the best experiences I've ever had."



Though Beatty has not encountered any racial slurs from either his teammates or staff at CU, he said he has also witnessed incidents of racism and racial slurring directed toward some of his teammates by opponents of other teams.

Beatty recalled a particularly disconcerting moment during a game against Texas last year in October.

“I know that when we played a Texas team last year in October, a couple of them threw out the n-word against some of my teammates,” Beatty said.

It is perhaps unavoidable for ongoing acts of racism and hate to occur toward different ethnic students at CU.

This past weekend, for example, Nigerian student Olubiyi Ogundipe, a 19-year-old economics major, was assaulted in a bias-motivated attack on the Boulder campus.

But for some at least, it is comforting to hear that within the football team, that while still acknowledging differences of background, race and ethnicity, there are absolutely feelings of brotherhood and unity.

“I think that we’re a football team first and I think that at the end of the day, that trumps race, that trumps where you are from, any type of cultural differences that we have,” Perkins said. “At the end of the day, the guy standing next to me, no matter what he looks like, no matter where he’s from, he’s my teammate and he’s my brother.”

For more information on the bias-motivated attack on campus, check out this [CU Independent article](#).

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