

Scotty McKnight set CU's all-time reception mark on a second-quarter TD.
Photo Courtesy: Associated Press



09/04/2010 B.G. Brooks, Contributing Editor

Brooks: Buffs Open Victoriously, But Eye Better Days

DENVER - That long-awaited win against their bitter in-state rival? *Check*. That much-needed fast start on college football's opening weekend? *Check*. The defense increasing its weekly turnover totals? *Check*. Scotty McKnight breaking the school career receiving mark? *Check*.

Yet late Saturday afternoon, the Colorado Buffaloes embarked on their half-hour bus ride back to Boulder knowing while they had taken care of business, their business in 2010 still requires an industrial-sized load of refinement.

But attending to business and leaving town with unfinished business amounts to good news and even better news for the Buffs, who dispatched Colorado State 24-3 at sweltering Invesco Field at Mile High in the

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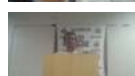
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Cinch Jeans Rocky Mountain Showdown.

"We're still hungry, we're still humble . . . Coach (Ron) Collins (defensive coordinator) pulled us aside and let us know we weren't perfect. We know that; we all left the field knowing we've got improvement to make," CU linebacker Jon Major said.

That also goes for the Buffs offense, which rolled to a 17-0 halftime lead under quarterback Tyler Hansen and added another third-quarter touchdown (24-0) before the Rams managed a fourth-quarter field goal to avoid being shutout in the series for the first time since 1957 (20-0).

Hansen finished with 17 completions (25 attempts, one interception) for 192 yards and two touchdowns. He was intercepted once. CU coach Dan Hawkins said his junior QB "did a nice job. He missed a couple of throws, but he made some, too . . . He certainly helped us early in the game getting away from some pressure. He has a greater understanding and he's much more comfortable as far as being able to check plans and being comfortable with the whole packages."

During CU's first-half surge, Hansen and McKnight connected on a pair of passes for 42 yards in an 82-yard drive. McKnight's first catch tied Michael Westbrook at 167 CU career receptions; his second catch - a 27-yarder for a score - shoved Westbrook's record aside.

McKnight, a senior captain, called his achievement "humbling, a great feeling," but added, "Numbers don't mean so much to me . . . I've been through a season where we won three games (2009) and I caught 76 balls - it's not fun."

Major's eight tackles (four solo) topped a CU defense that snuffed CSU and its freshman quarterback, Pete Thomas. The Buffs intercepted him three times, allowed the Rams only 49 yards rushing and forced them into three-and-outs on their first three series of the game.

Major made the game's most significant stop - a fourth-and-one stuff of CSU's running quarterback, T.J. Borcky that gave the Buffs possession on the Rams' 44-yard line.

SpineOne Player of the Game: Junior quarterback Tyler Hansen was selected as the SpineOne Player of the Game. Hansen was 17-of-25 for 192 yards and a pair of touchdowns in CU's season-opening win over Colorado State.

Afterwards, CSU coach Steve Fairchild had his doubts about his gamble, saying the decision "backfired . . . but as young as we were (he played seven freshmen), I knew manufacturing long drives would be a challenge. You should win that (fourth-and-one) nine of 10 times. In retrospect, it was a bad call."

09/04/2010



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Five plays later, Hansen and "newly acquired" receiver Travon Patterson, a transfer from Southern California, teamed for an 18-yard touchdown pass on which "TP" showed the leave-'em-looking speed he was expected to bring to a position that now is, ah, up to speed.

"I didn't have the best day I could have had," Patterson said. "But I gave my all and we came out with the victory - that's all I wanted. I'm glad to get the 'bubbles' out of my stomach; it's get the first one out of the way."

Patterson also contended that CU "kept the offense basic . . . when we open it, when we iron the mistakes out, it's going to be explosive."

After Aric Goodman's PAT, the Buffs went up 7-0 and were in control of almost everything except themselves for the rest of the afternoon. They were penalized 10 times for 104 yards - a decidedly less-than- efficient start for a team that drew 107 flags in 2009.

"Running, running and more running," said Hawkins when asked about a deterrent to the flags. "We'll be on that."

In addition to his pair of TD passes, Hansen also ran eight times for 32 yards, including a 1-yard scoring sneak. But he also was sacked twice and lost 30 yards, one of the sacks costing CU 16 yards on a regrettable series that started in CSU territory (49 yard line) after an interception by safety Anthony Perkins.

Still, coupled with tailback Rodney "Speedy" Stewart's 16 carries for 68 yards, Hansen's mobility gave the Buffs a running dimension they didn't have in last season's 23-17 loss to the Rams.

CU, which managed only 29 rushing yards on 21 attempts against CSU last season, finished with 115 ground yards Saturday. Behind Stewart was true freshman Justin "JT" Torres, who carried five times in the fourth quarter for 26 yards (5.2 average).

The Buffs got a boost from Goodman, who hit a 28-yard field goal in the first half, made three extra point attempts and sailed three of his five kickoffs into or out of the end zone.

"He kicked the ball great," Hawkins said. "I'm just really proud of him. He's a guy that's taken a lot of heat for a couple of years. You bring in a bunch of guys and challenge him - and he really has answered. I think he's really perfected his game and matured a lot. That's a credit to him."

If there was an opening-day downer for the Buffs, it was in a potentially serious knee injury suffered by nickel back Parker Orms during punt coverage in the first half. "You're heartbroken when a player goes down; you're crushed," Hawkins said. "Hopefully, he'll be OK."

Overall, Hawkins lauded his defense and intimated his offense, although spotty, was opening-day passable if not polished. "But certainly winning and winning against your rival and starting the season on a winning note is very positive," he said. "I thought our guys handled that really well and I'm proud of them for that."

"I think they had a glimpse of how good they can be . . ."

Starting very soon, a mere glimpse won't be good enough.

BUFF BITS: Saturday's game was the first of 10 to be played in Denver and attracted 60,989 - the smallest crowd of the series for games played at Invesco or its predecessor, Mile High Stadium . . . Corner Jalil Brown and nickel back Travis Sandersfeld, subbing for Orms, made CU's two other interceptions. Sandersfeld's pick was the first of his career . . . Hansen's interception (by corner Momo Thomas) followed Brown's acrobatic pick in the final minute of the first half . . . Defensive tackle Will Pericak blocked a Ben DeLine field goal attempt on the final play of the first half . . . CU punter Zach Grossnickle averaged 41.4 yards on seven punts, several of them of the rugby variety . . . Patterson returned four punts for 46 yards, including a 25-yard return. The Buffs averaged 3.3 yards a punt return last season - last in the Big 12 Conference . . . Patterson's TD was his first since he was a senior in high school (Long Beach Poly) in 2005 . . . Both teams were coming off 3-9 seasons in 2009, but Saturday's loss extended CSU's losing streak to 10. After the Rams opened by beating the Buffs, they won another pair then lost their final nine games . . . Hawkins won for the third time (3-2) against CSU and for the third time (3-2) in his five openers as the Buffs coach . . . CU now owns a 7-5 edge in the past 12 games with its intrastate rival from the Mountain West Conference . . . CU travels to Cal next weekend seeking to break a 13-game road losing streak.

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SHOW MENU



CU Buffs triumph in showdown

Hansen, defense deliver against CSU

By Kyle Ringo, Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 09/04/2010 02:54:44 PM MDT



DENVER -- The Colorado Buffaloes turned a year of frustration into domination on the football field Saturday in a 24-3 romp over Colorado State in the Rocky Mountain Showdown at Invesco Field.

It was a proud afternoon for CU coach Dan Hawkins who has endured a tough year since starting the 2009 season with a loss to the Rams. Hawkins gathered his seniors on the field after the win and then stepped away as Gov. Bill Ritter presented the Centennial Cup to captain Cody Hawkins and the rest of his classmates.

"Certainly winning against your rival and starting the season on a good note is very positive," Dan Hawkins said. "I thought our guys handled all of that very well, and I'm proud of them certainly for that."

The best part about the day for Buffs fans, other than having the stadium mostly to themselves in the final minutes of the fourth quarter? CU players left a victorious locker room after the

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season opener feeling they had won easily despite playing sloppily.

Hawkins seemed to agree with that assessment by referencing the need to clean things up multiple times in his postgame press conference. The Buffs committed 11 penalties, one of which was offset by a penalty from the Rams.

It was the first win for the Buffs away from Folsom Field since beating the Rams here to start the 2008 season.

"We played OK today, but we can do so much better," senior wide receiver and co-captain Scotty McKnight said. "We can play better against Cal next week, and I'm already looking ahead to that."

It was an historic afternoon for McKnight and could be one of several for him this fall.

McKnight caught six passes for 78 yards and a touchdown and became the program's all-time leading receiver in the process. He can break records for receiving yards and receiving touchdowns this season, too.

He broke Michael Westbrook's record in the second quarter when he hauled in a 27-yard touchdown pass from Tyler Hansen to put the Buffs up 14-0. It was the 168th reception of a career that he began as a walk-on. McKnight broke the record in front of his family and with his best friend, New York Jets quarterback Mark Sanchez, in the stands.

"For me, I came in and thought, 'Wow, it would be cool to break the record, but it would be really, really cool to beat Colorado State,'" McKnight said. "That's all I really wanted to do."

The Buffs built a 17-0 halftime advantage behind a pair of touchdown passes from Hansen, who was making his first appearance in the rivalry in front of the smallest crowd in the history of games played in Denver in the series. The announced attendance was 60,989.

Hansen connected with wide receiver Travon Patterson on an 18-yard score in the first quarter. It was the first touchdown of Patterson's college career, coming in the first game of his senior season.

Hansen finished the day completing 17 of 25 passes for 192 yards. He also threw one interception.

Hansen said the CU offense was far from perfect Saturday, but he is excited by the possibilities.

"It's a lot different," he said. "We can now blow the top off the coverage and open some lanes up for other guys."

Colorado had its way with a young CSU offense led by true freshman quarterback Pete Thomas.

The Buffs intercepted Thomas three times and allowed the Rams only one play of 20 or more yards. They took a shutout into the fourth quarter before allowing a 43-yard field goal with 10 minutes remaining. Defensive tackle Will Pericak had blocked a CSU kick to end the first half.

The Buffs held the Rams to 249 total yards, and stuffed coach Steve Fairchild's running game. The Rams gained just 49 yards on the ground, and CU allowed just 1 of 12 third-down conversions.

"This is more about Colorado," Fairchild said. "Dan Hawkins had his team better prepared than I did. They were the better football team today and they certainly deserved to win that game."

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Woelk: Buffs' win something to build on

Neill Woelk Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 09/05/2010 12:13:18 AM MDT

DENVER -- That's a start.

The Colorado Buffaloes weren't perfect Saturday afternoon -- far from it, in fact -- and they still dominated rival Colorado State.

That's a welcome bit of news for fans of a team that won just three games last year and has been picked to finish dead last this year in the Big 12 North.

The Buffs played well, and still have plenty of room for improvement. That's a major difference from a year ago, when they finished far too many games lamenting the missed assignments and blown plays that added up to another loss.

"We got the win, which is great -- but we want to score 40 points a game," Buff quarterback Tyler Hansen said. "It's nice to get a win, but we can get a lot better. I think you saw some glimpses of what we can do, and I think we just scratched the surface."

One thing is certain: these are not your 2009 Buffaloes. There is legitimate team speed in this bunch, from receivers Travon Patterson, Toney Clemons and Paul Richardson to running back Rodney Stewart. Senior receiver Scotty McKnight is still one of the most reliable and consistent players on the field, and the Buffs' offensive line has improved with age.

And, while it's difficult to gauge too much given the youth of CSU's offense, the Buffs' defense also looks vastly improved. The Rams' longest gain of the day was a 20-yard run late in the game, and no pass went farther than 18 yards.

Last year, the Buffs gave up 53 plays of 20 yards or longer -- most of them coming when it mattered.

"I think they have a glimpse of how good they can be if we clean some things up," head coach Dan Hawkins said. "We're going to continue to get better."

First on that cleaning list would be yellow flags. The Buffs finished the game with 10 penalties for 104 yards, a number that won't be acceptable against a better opponent. At least three promising drives were cut short by penalties, with three different CU offensive linemen called for false starts.

But on this day, at least, the good outweighed the bad. Hansen was efficient and effective, throwing for 192 yards and two touchdowns. The running game produced 115 yards, with Rodney Stewart picking up 67 on just 16 carries. Patterson showed what can happen when he gets the ball in space when he took a short pass over the middle and converted it into an 18-yard untouched burn into the end zone, and McKnight was simply McKnight -- six catches, 78 yards and a touchdown.

Defensively, CU's run defense was stellar when it mattered. The Rams totaled just 77 yards on the ground, and 57 of those came in the fourth quarter, when the outcome was no longer in doubt. Meanwhile, CU's secondary picked off three CSU passes and the Buffs allowed CSU to convert just one of 12 third-down tries.

It all added up to a much-needed boost of confidence.

"We've been telling ourselves that we can be a good team," cornerback Jalil Brown said. "We've been having good practices, everybody has been doing their jobs -- but we still had to come out and show it. We needed this today."

The Buffs will need that confidence next week. Immediately on the horizon is a game at Cal, where they'll attempt to end a lengthy -- and painful -- road losing streak.

But now the Cal game has positive implications. It's a big game for the Buffs, one they can look forward to with eager

anticipation rather than a feeling of dread.

"We've got to get better," Hansen said. "We know that. But at least we're talking about getting better after we beat someone 24-3. That's actually pretty good news."

It's definitely a start.

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McKnight sets CU receptions mark

Speedy additions Patterson, Clemons beef up Buffs' WR corp

By Ryan Thorburn Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 09/05/2010 12:14:17 AM MDT

DENVER -- Scotty McKnight was a good player on bad Colorado teams.

Now that the Buffs' new all-time leading receiver is surrounded by talented route-running mates, the senior might be able to end a great collegiate career on a winning team.

McKnight set the CU record for career receptions on a 27-yard touchdown catch that gave the Buffs a commanding 14-0 lead en route to a 24-3 suffocation of Colorado State on Saturday at Invesco Field.

"To surpass all the great guys that have been here is a great feeling. And the best part about it is we came in here and got a win against Colorado State and I caught a touchdown that helped my team get the victory," McKnight said after a business-as-usual six-catch, 78-yard afternoon. "I think it's something I'll look back on at the end of the season and realize how special it is, but right now I'm a guy leading the team and I know there are things we can clean up.

"I also know how good we can be."

McKnight (171 receptions, 2007-present) passed Michael Westbrook (167, 1991-94) on CU's all-time receptions list. He has now caught a pass in a school record 37 consecutive regular season games (38 including the 2007 Independence Bowl).

No. 21's statistical achievements and consistent play in the opener were as predictable as CSU's play-calling. The storyline that should really have Buffs fans excited is the instant impact of transfers Travon Patterson and Toney Clemons.

Patterson, the much-ballyhooed USC transfer, gives CU a deep threat at wide receiver and a legitimate punt returner for the first time since Josh Smith terrorized CSU two years ago.

"All three of those end guys give them a little juice," CSU head coach Steve Fairchild noted of the speed upgrade. "That's a much better group of receivers than they had last year when we played them. That's an advantage to their quarterback and their run game."

After a brief feeling out period, CSU blinked first and failed to convert a fourth-and-1 from its own 44. On third-and-18 moments later, Tyler Hansen connected with Patterson on a simple crossing pattern that he turned into his first touchdown since high school and a 7-0 lead.

"That was my first collegiate touchdown and it was an honor," said Patterson, who also had a 25-yard punt return. "The coaches did what they had to do to get me in there, and I'm happy."

Clemens, the Michigan transfer who sat out last season, added three catches for 25 yards and a 10-yard run. The more balanced Buffs had eight different players catch a pass as Hansen completed 17 of 25 passes for 192 yards with two touchdowns and one interception.

"It's not to take anything away from guys who have played here because I'm still close with a ton of them. But to have Travon and Toney ... those guys are so electric, fast and consistent, which is hard to find. It just makes things so much better and so much easier," McKnight said. "It's more of a joy to play. You win like that, it's awesome."

New York Jets starting quarterback Mark Sanchez was in the stands sitting with McKnight's family and cheering on his longtime friend.

With at least 11 games remaining at CU, McKnight has 1,978 career receiving yards (seventh all-time). Javon Green

(sixth, 2,031) and Derek McCoy (fifth, 2,038) are next on the list.

"Scotty already broke the (receptions) record today, and I'm happy for him," Patterson said. "He's going to be real dangerous this season with all three of us out there."

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Hansen hungry for more on scoreboard

Quarterback adds another dimension to Buffs' offense

By Neill Woelk Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 09/05/2010 12:14:47 AM MDT

DENVER -- Colorado quarterback Tyler Hansen is now 1-0 against the Buffs' in-state rivals and 1-0 in season openers.

He's also far from satisfied. Moments after CU had put the finishing touches on a 24-3 win over Colorado State on Saturday, Hansen said the win was nice, but "we want to score 40 points a game."

He'll have his chance. After earning the starting job over Cody Hawkins in fall camp, Hansen solidified that position with his performance Saturday. The Buff junior completed 17 of 25 attempts for 192 yards, one touchdown and an interception, and also rushed for 32 yards and a touchdown (not counting yards subtracted for sacks).

"He did a nice job," CU coach Dan Hawkins said. "He made some plays with his feet. He missed a couple throws, but he made some too. He's never going to be perfect, but I thought he played really well."

Hansen certainly drew the attention of Colorado State coach Steve Fairchild.

"He makes things happen for them," Fairchild said. "That little naked bootleg they run is really effective. He runs that offense."

Hansen does indeed add a dimension to CU's offense. He carried twice for 17 yards on CU's first scoring drive, and later added two more runs for 7 yards each before scoring CU's final touchdown on a 1-yard quarterback sneak.

"I'm a lot more relaxed out there," Hansen said. "Coach (Eric) Kiesau has taught me to read and react ... I felt like I was doing that for the most part today. I missed some things, which is going to happen, but for the most part I was on my reads. I felt really comfortable."

Hansen did make one major mistake when he took a sack for 16 yards early in the fourth quarter.

"Sometime you're going to have that, especially with a quarterback that can run," Hawkins said. "But he has a greater understanding and he's much more comfortable as far as being able to check plays and comfortable with the whole package."

Hansen's two touchdown passes were picture-perfect. He found Travon Patterson over the middle for an 18-yard strike for CU's first score of the game, then connected with a wide-open Scotty McKnight for a 27-yard scoring pass to put the Buffs up 14-0 in the second quarter.

"We've got weapons, and it's not just one guy," Hansen said. "Teams can't just concentrate on stopping one receiver. They have to respect all of them, and it makes a difference."

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CU turns attention to earning road win

By Kyle Ringo Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 09/05/2010 12:15:50 AM MDT

DENVER -- Now can they do it on the road?

Colorado quarterback Tyler Hansen was still on the field Saturday with the celebration of a win over Colorado State just beginning when he began encouraging teammates to turn their focus toward next week's game at California.

The Buffs' struggles on the road are well documented. They haven't won a true road game since beating Texas Tech in Lubbock, Texas, in October 2007. They will be facing a future conference opponent from the Pac-10 and the Bears also started well, beating UC-Davis 52-3 Saturday.

But the way the Buffs played against the Rams added to a more confident aura around the team this year. Now they must build on it.

"Absolutely," senior cornerback Jimmy Smith said. "We had confidence this summer. It was weird. The whole team morale just changed and we all just wanted to win. I think this win, and the way we won, even though it was sloppy, I think we can build off that and go out next week and put on a dominant performance."

The Buffs often were flat and lacked focus away from home last season, even in weeks following solid outings at home. They dropped the first four road games of the year by double-digit margins, but improved in the final two. They have lost 11 consecutive true road games.

"I feel like we have a better energy as a team," receiver Tony Clemons said. "We're more focused. We're more prepared and more vocal. We're more confident. We feed off our own energy. I think in the past they might have fed off the home energy a lot and came out flat on the road. This team, we feed off each other. We fuel each other and that's going to help us on the road."

Orms hurts knee

The last time redshirt freshman defensive back Parker Orms played at Invesco Field, he won a state title at Wheat Ridge High School, scoring the winning touchdown in the waning moments.

Orms had a decidedly different experience Saturday when he was injured covering a punt. Orms, who started the game at nickelback, was on crutches after the victory and was able to celebrate with teammates, but he might be lost for the season.

Orms said it was a non-contact injury. He said X-rays were negative but team trainers told him they believe he tore the anterior cruciate ligament in his right knee. He is scheduled to have a magnetic resonance imaging test.

"It went from the greatest day to the worst day of my career," Orms said comparing his two experiences in the stadium.

Veteran Travis Sandersfeld replaced Orms and came up with a key interception.

"I thought he did amazing," Orms said. "That pick was a great play and I was so proud of him."

Rogers debuts

Former Colorado offensive lineman Victor Rogers debuted as the sideline reporter for KOA radio Saturday. Rogers replaced Charles Johnson, who now does a midday sports talk show in Denver on 87.7 FM with former CU quarterback Joel Klatt.

Rogers said there were some rough spots during his first outing such as transitioning in and out of postgame interviews.

He was in the locker room after the game when the team sang the fight song. Asked if he sang along, he smiled and said, "Quietly and to the side."

"It went well," Rogers said. "I loved it."

Goodman looks strong

Senior place-kicker Aric Goodman enjoyed a solid day making his only field goal attempt from 28 yards and booting three kickoffs out of the back of the end zone. Goodman is coming off offseason hip surgery and was told by doctors he might not be able to kick again.

"I'm just really proud of him," Dan Hawkins said. "He's a guy who has taken a lot of heat for a couple years. You bring in a couple guys and challenge him and all he has done is answer it."

Penalty problem persists

The Buffs committed 107 penalties in 2009 and continued the trend in the opener with 11, including one that was offset by a flag on CSU. How will Hawkins address the issue?

"Ah, let's see here, there will be running, running and running," he said.

Notable

CU linebacker Jon Major had a career best eight tackles and made his first start. ... The Buffs have at least one sack in 21 consecutive games. ... David Bakhtiari, Kyle Cefalo, Clemons, Josh Hartigan, Orms and DaVaughn Thornton made the first start of their careers. ... Five true freshmen played for the Buffs, including Jered Bell, Ryan Iverson, Paul Richardson, Justin Torres and Chidera Uzo-Diribe. ... Colorado sold approximately 33,500 of its allotment of 37,000 tickets.

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Bufs' defense picks apart Rams freshman

CU intercepts CSU's Thomas three times

By Ryan Thorburn Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 09/05/2010 12:16:21 AM MDT

DENVER -- It was the script the Buffs secondary had hoped to star in.

Act 1 -- Colorado takes an early lead. Act 2 -- Colorado State's true freshman quarterback is forced to pass the ball. Act 3 -
- The defensive backs from Boulder frolic at an afternoon pick party at Invesco Field.

Curtains for the Rams.

"We wanted to make sure we started strong, especially defensively," strong safety Anthony Perkins said after CU's 24-3 victory over CSU on Saturday. "Last year they came out and got some big plays on us early, and we wanted to make sure we eliminated that."

After CU took a 14-0 lead in the first quarter, Pete Thomas, CSU's promising but unproven quarterback, was intercepted three times.

"He definitely showed some tendencies that a freshman would use on the field, staring down receivers and not looking off safeties, things veterans usually do," said CU senior cornerback Jalil Brown, who made a spectacular pick to thwart a somewhat promising CSU drive in the final minute of the first half. "He did get it picked up in the second half and got some momentum going. But for the most part they couldn't run the ball and were forced to pass it and we stepped up and made some big plays."

There was some bad news early for the Buffs. Redshirt freshman Parker Orms, who started the game in CU's nickel package, suffered what is believed to be a season-ending knee injury covering a punt early in the first quarter.

Travis Sandersfeld filled in and made the first interception of Thomas to set CU up at the CSU 46-yard line. The turnover led to a 28-yard field goal by Aric Goodman to give the Buffs a commanding 17-0 lead.

"To get the momentum going and make a big play, it's a huge thing," Sandersfeld said. "You know a freshman guy is going to have some flaws. I felt like he did great, but I felt like our pressure got to him and he kind of forced some throws. He also made some great throws."

Thomas completed 24 of 33 passes for 196 yards. The Rams obviously didn't get into the end zone, and the longest pass play CU yielded was for 18 yards.

"It really is a bummer to see Parker go down right away like that. Especially because of what a big contributor he was to our defense," Perkins said. "Travis stepped in and had a pick on one of his first plays in, that's just how people have to step in and make plays. ...

"We did a good job and we were very opportunistic on certain plays, but we are a long way off of where we want to be as a defense. We have a long way to go."

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TheDenverChannel.com

McKnight Leads Colorado To 24-3 Win Over CSU

Related To Story

Bufs Blow Out Rams In Rocky Mountain Showdown

POSTED: 10:11 am MDT September 6, 2010

UPDATED: 10:20 am MDT September 6, 2010

DENVER -- Speedy wide receivers Toney Clemons, Travon Patterson and Paul Richardson joined the Colorado lineup Saturday, and senior slot receiver Scotty McKnight still stole the show.

McKnight became Colorado's career receptions leader with a 27-yard touchdown grab that sparked the Buffaloes to a 24-3 season-opening win over archrival Colorado State on Saturday.

McKnight found himself wide open on the blitz.

"I'd love to tell you I just smoked someone off the line, but it didn't happen," McKnight said. "They brought the perfect defense against it and as an older guy, I thought, 'Wow. I'm going to be wide open on this play.' ... It just seemed like the ball hung in the air for two weeks."

McKnight's 168th career catch broke the mark set by Michael Westbrook from 1991-94. The senior finished with six catches for 78 yards. McKnight now has 171 receptions and his 16 TDs are four shy of the school record.

Making his memorable day all the sweeter was having his childhood friend Mark Sanchez, quarterback of the New York Jets, watching from the stands.

"He sat with my family incognito. No one recognized him," McKnight said.

Sanchez was thankful he was on hand to see his buddy break the record.

"That was a perfect call," Sanchez told The Associated Press. "I was fired up and to happen on a touchdown like that? It was scripted perfect. It couldn't have been any better.

"I'm so happy I could be here. I'm so happy that Rex (Ryan) gave us a couple of days off and is so lenient about stuff like this because he knows how important it is to me. He's like a family member. He deserves it. He worked hard and hopefully it's a good start to their season."

This is a crucial year for Colorado coach Dan Hawkins, who has yet to post a winning season since arriving in Boulder from Boise State in 2006.

With three interceptions, freshman quarterback Pete Thomas had a rough debut for the Rams, who lost their last nine games of last season to finish 3-9, same as the Buffaloes.

"I feel like I got that first game under my skin, and we're only going to get better from here," said Thomas, who finished 24 of 32 for 196 yards.



Tyler Hansen was 17 of 25 for 192 yards, two TDs and an interception. He scored on a 1-yard keeper.

McKnight has caught a pass in a school-record and NCAA-active-best 38 straight games, counting the 2007 Independence Bowl.

After he hauled in his record-breaking catch, the Buffaloes made it 17-0 on Aric Goodman's 28-yard field goal that was set up by Travis Sanderfeld's interception at midfield.

Ben DeLine, whose 37-yard field goal attempt was blocked by Will Pericak at the end of the first half, hit a 43-yarder with 9:36 left for the Rams' only points.

Patterson, a senior transfer from Southern Cal, opened the scoring with an 18-yard touchdown catch from Hansen. Patterson's first TD catch since his senior year in high school in 2005 was set up when Jon Major stuffed CSU's T.J. Borcky for no gain on fourth-and-1 at the Rams' 44.

Despite his disappointment, Rams third-year coach Steve Fairchild was encouraged by what he saw from Thomas.

"The future is bright," Fairchild said.

Rams offensive lineman Paul Madsen said he saw the same silver lining in Thomas' poise and play.

"I would expect him to be very nervous, but the only thing I sensed was a great level of excitement," Madsen said. "He's going to be great down the road."

Colorado freshman safety Parker Orms left on crutches after injuring his right knee covering a punt. Speedy wide receivers Toney Clemons, Travon Patterson and Paul Richardson joined the Colorado lineup Saturday, and senior slot receiver Scotty McKnight still stole the show.

McKnight became Colorado's career receptions leader with a 27-yard touchdown grab that sparked the Buffaloes to a 24-3 season-opening win over archrival Colorado State on Saturday.

McKnight found himself wide open on the blitz.

"I'd love to tell you I just smoked someone off the line, but it didn't happen," McKnight said. "They brought the perfect defense against it and as an older guy, I thought, 'Wow. I'm going to be wide open on this play.' ... It just seemed like the ball hung in the air for two weeks."

McKnight's 168th career catch broke the mark set by Michael Westbrook from 1991-94. The senior finished with six catches for 78 yards. McKnight now has 171 receptions and his 16 TDs are four shy of the school record.

Making his memorable day all the sweeter was having his childhood friend Mark Sanchez, quarterback of the New York Jets, watching from the stands.

"He sat with my family incognito. No one recognized him," McKnight said.

Sanchez was thankful he was on hand to see his buddy break the record.

"That was a perfect call," Sanchez told The Associated Press. "I was fired up and to happen on a touchdown like that? It was scripted perfect. It couldn't have been any better."

"I'm so happy I could be here. I'm so happy that Rex (Ryan) gave us a couple of days off and is so lenient about stuff like this because he knows how important it is to me. He's like a family member. He deserves it. He worked hard and hopefully it's a good start to their season."

This is a crucial year for Colorado coach Dan Hawkins, who has yet to post a winning season since arriving in Boulder from Boise State in 2006.

With three interceptions, freshman quarterback Pete Thomas had a rough debut for the Rams, who lost their last nine games of last season to finish 3-9, same as the Buffaloes.

"I feel like I got that first game under my skin, and we're only going to get better from here," said Thomas, who finished 24 of 32 for 196 yards.

Tyler Hansen was 17 of 25 for 192 yards, two TDs and an interception. He scored on a 1-yard keeper.

McKnight has caught a pass in a school-record and NCAA-active-best 38 straight games, counting the 2007 Independence Bowl.

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Colorado freshman safety Parker Orms left on crutches after injuring his right knee covering a punt.

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One CU receiver made school history in his fourth and final season. For another three receivers, it was the beginning of a new history together in black and gold.

The Bufs handled rival Colorado State 24-3 at Invesco Field in Denver on Sept. 4 with a steady pass attack and a solid dosage of turnovers, just what the Hawk ordered.

Senior Scotty McKnight's six receptions boost him past Colorado great Michael Westbrook as CU's all time leader in receptions at 171.

The latest edition of the Rocky Mountain Showdown also marked the anticipated premiere of the trio of transfer wideouts: junior Toney Clemons, senior Travon Patterson and freshmen Paul Richardson. They may never touch McKnight's records, but like the record breaker says, the statistics mean little if wins don't come alongside them.

"The numbers thing doesn't mean too much to me, and I think you hear guys talk about that, but I really don't care," McKnight said. "I've been through a season where we won three games and I caught 76 balls and it's not fun. It's not fun waking up everyday realizing that your team has let down the school."

For Coach Dan Hawkins, a win against the in-state rival gives him one less week to have to answer the cries of his critics. If winning solves everything, then Hawkins can look back at the formula his team used against CSU to keep building.

"Winning against you're rival and starting you're season off winning is very positive," Hawkins said. "They have a glimpse of how good they can be when they continue to get better."

An offense that showed the potential to be an eight-win team is far more talented on the outside with the additions at receiver. That all stems from the refocused offensive line, which gave quarterback junior Tyler Hansen enough space for three touchdown passes while allowing junior Rodney Stewart more than four yards per carry.

Stewart said his job was made easy thanks to the structure around him.

"We've got some great receivers and some bigger running lanes," he said. "It's hard for the defense to choose what they want to do."

On defense the Bufs pressed CSU's freshman quarterback into three interceptions.

The introduction of Pete Thomas to the college football world may detract from season's aspirations in Fort Collins. While, 50 miles away in Boulder, the story will take on a different meaning all together. A defense that looked straight out of the 90s stuffed the Rams for a measly 49 rushing yards.

Sophomore linebacker Jon Major, who led the Bufs with eight tackles, told reporters after the game that he knew from the first series that CSU wasn't going to be able to run the ball effectively.

"There wasn't anything that we hadn't seen [on film]," Major said. "Coaches did a great job in preparing us. That allowed us to play fast and we saw everything."

The only area where the team really struggled at was discipline. Resting on 118th place in the FBS (out of 120 teams) in penalties per game last year, the 11 penalties for 95 yards on Saturday showed the Bufs still can't go a game without seeing yellow flags everywhere. The team leader knows it will make it that much tougher to beat powerhouses like Georgia and Oklahoma.

“That’s natural to have that happen the first game, but you can’t have that happen the next game,” Hansen said. “Those are precious yards, you work for those yards, and you need those yards.”

Speaking of yards, Hansen threw for 192 of them, 78 of which went to McKnight. Receivers Clemons, Patterson and Richardson combined for five catches for 54 yards and a touchdown.

Patterson saw the first ball thrown to him in a CU uniform go through his hands, forcing his team to punt. Minutes later Ram defenders watched the USC transfer take a pass from his quarterback and turn it into six points. The senior also returned all three punts for a total of 46 yards.

Hawkins alluded to the fact that the new weapons at receiver may limit McKnight’s numbers, and that’s just fine with his four-year starter.

“When you have guys as fast as them it opens things up for a guy like me in the slot,” McKnight said. “Having those guys has helped me so much, and they’re going to help this team.”

McKnight broke Westbrook’s 15-year-old record on a 21-yard flag route, which got him wide open in the end zone. So now that he has the record for most catches at the school, what’s the next goal in line for the senior captain?

“My next goal is to beat Cal,” McKnight said.

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

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ROCKY MOUNTAIN SHOWDOWN

Colorado takes showdown with 24-3 win over CSU

By Chris Dempsey
The Denver Post
 The Denver Post

Posted: 09/04/2010 11:53:39 AM MDT

Dan Hawkins' sigh of relief, if he had one Saturday, could be heard only by those closest to him. His Colorado Buffaloes overwhelmed Colorado State 24-3, momentarily taking the heat off the coach.

The talk shows will have a little less material this week. The sports bars won't buzz with talk of Hawkins' potential replacement. CSU never threatened a Colorado team that looked dominant defensively and faster than it has in years offensively.

Then again, the season opener left plenty of room for question marks, with the caveat represented on the other sideline, a woefully young Colorado State team that lost its 10th consecutive game. Hawkins summed up what the 60,989 fans at Invesco Field thought.

"I thought we were OK," he said.

OK won't cut it for him in this, his fifth season and in search of his first winning season. Neither will 10 penalties for 104 yards. But OK on this day against an 11 1/2-point underdog was plenty OK. The Buffaloes' defense, with seven starters back, held the Rams to 49 yards rushing on 2.0 yards a carry with the sterling secondary intercepting three passes against CSU true freshman quarterback Pete Thomas.

Colorado quarterback Tyler Hansen threw two touchdown passes, and Scotty McKnight showed he's even more productive with some help as he caught six passes for 78 yards and broke Michael Westbrook's career CU receiving record.

Not that McKnight cared all that much.

"After the season, it'll be like, 'Wow, I accomplished that,' " McKnight said. "But getting that win was first and foremost on my list, especially how the game went last year. I got knocked out, and we lost, and they stomped on Ralphie on the 50-yard line.

"So there was a revenge factor I wanted to take care of my senior year."

CU's defense set a permanent tone, stopping CSU early, including a stuff of receiver T.J. Borcky on a wildcat run on fourth-and-1 at the CSU 44 midway through the first quarter.

Explained CSU coach Steve Fairchild about the fourth-and-1: "I knew that as young as we were, manufacturing long drives was going to be a challenge."

Officially signaling the start of a new era of fleet Colorado wideouts, Southern Cal transfer Travon Patterson caught a slant and outsprinted CSU 18 yards for a 7-0 lead. Admire the offense, but thank the defense.

"You always want to go three- and-out," Buffs linebacker Jon Major said. "It helps the offense out too. You put your foot on their throat, you want to finish it. I think we did a pretty good job right away."

Colorado all but put it away in the second quarter when McKnight was found so alone he could've tweeted best buddy Mark Sanchez in the stands. Breaking free in a zone a safety vacated in order to blitz, McKnight's 27-yard TD catch not only broke Westbrook's mark, it broke CSU's back for a 14-0 lead.

"I'd love to tell you I smoked someone off the line, but it was a play that we've worked in practice a ton," McKnight said. "They brought the perfect defense against it. As an older guy, I kind of saw it coming, and I was like, 'Wow. I'm going to be really wide open.' "

While Hawkins' long year got just a bit shorter, Fairchild got a glimpse of the slog he faces in his third year. He played seven true freshmen, including the nation's only true frosh starting quarterback, and 14 new starters.

The 6-foot-5 Thomas did admirably for playing in front of 56,000 more fans than he ever had before. He hit 24-of-33 passes for 196 yards, but he threw three interceptions, albeit two of them on spectacular grabs by Travis Sandersfeld and Jalil Brown.

"The whole tempo thing can improve, but it wasn't bad," Fairchild said. "He has a presence and he's got good vision. He's fairly accurate — we didn't test too many balls down the field — but I thought he did a nice job."

Thomas had no help from the running game as CU overpowered CSU's young line. Starting tailback Raymond Carter had 10 yards on 11 carries, and CSU had three first downs rushing.

The Rams' defense held its own against Colorado's massive — and, finally, healthy — offensive line. Rodney Stewart had a pedestrian 67 yards, but in one six-play stretch in the third quarter, Colorado had four consecutive first downs and Hansen's 1-yard TD sneak for a 24-0 lead.

Still, Fairchild has a long honeymoon. Hawkins is five years into a rocky marriage. However, Colorado fans may renew their vows with Hawkins if he wins at California.

"If we lose next week," Stewart said, "this win means nothing."

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WOODY PAIGE

Paige: CU's beatdown shows improvement

By Woody Paige
The Denver Post
The Denver Post

Posted: 09/05/2010 01:00:00 AM MDT

Although the Buffs did show up and the Rams were shut down, it was difficult to discern at the end which team actually had won the Rocky Mountain Showupshutdown.

The scoreboard did show: Colorado 24, Colorado State 3.

But the players, the coaches and the fans of both state schools sort of strolled silently away from the stadium.

Perhaps because the game was decided early and was, frankly, rather boring.

Maybe because the 90-degree temperature, with no freshening breeze, at high noon had, by 3 p.m., zapped everybody, especially those — many — who had been consuming mass quantities of adult beverages in the parking lots before the game.

Probably because hardly anyone wanted to labor on this weekend.

Possibly because only around 40,000 interested parties came out. (The attendance was announced as 60,989, but the number must have included those people at nearby Elitch Gardens and the downtown Taste of Colorado.)

Perchance because the Rams, who have lost 10 consecutive games, face another unfruitful season.

In all probability, because with the score at 24-zip, the Buffaloes began glancing ahead to the game — it's Pac-10 football! — at Cal.

Definitely, it was odd to watch the Buffs, coming back from the same 3-9 record as the Rams, treat the victory in ho-hum-drum style. The band barely played on, and the players went off hastily after the trophy ceremony. At the tunnel, coach Dan Hawkins high-fived one extended hand.

"We're more of a mature team this year," quarterback Tyler Hansen said afterward.

One might think that the Buffsters might be in a celebratory mood, with just two victories in four seasons against the Rammies, only eight victories in the last two seasons and the importance of victories this year for the coach's future.

Doubtless, it was because everybody could tell that CSU is not very good, and nobody can tell if CU will be very good.

Colorado is better on offense with the name of Hansen finally written in Sharpie (not Etch-A-Sketch) at quarterback, as many as five wide receivers who can catch and run, Rodney Stewart, as usual, proving he is speedy and occasionally elusive, and an offensive line that could start for a few NFL teams.

Colorado is better on defense with a major (Jon Major) leading at outside linebacker and a minor (freshman Chidera Uzo-Diribe) helping in the defensive line, with a streaming video of veterans.

Colorado is better on special teams, with Aric Goodman making his only field-goal attempt and forcing three touchbacks.

Colorado coach Hawkins is feeling better in his Sir Thomas More, woe-is-me role this season. When the victory was over, the three men who will determine his fate — the Colorado president, the CU-Boulder chancellor and the Buffaloes' athletic director — trailed Hawkins into the locker room. They were smiling.

"A win is better than a loss," said a subdued Hawkins.

Then Hawkins used his favorite expression five separate times: "We just have to clean up a few things."

Hansen entered the room and twice said: "We have to clean up a few things."

The slogan for 2010: "Clean Up on Aisle Buffs."

CSU coach Steve Fairchild seemed more enthused about the Buffs than did Hawkins: "This (game) is about Colorado. They were better prepared. They certainly were the better football team, and they deserved to win."

Fairchild, who has been an assistant in Fort Collins and the head coach for the past two seasons, also said: "We have a long way to go, but there's something in me that tells me that by the end of the year this offense will be better than any since I've been here."

Freshman Pete Thomas seems like he will be a quality quarterback someday, but not this day. That voice inside Fairchild might be whispering: "Pepto-Bismol."

The Rams may win three games again. Surely the Buffs will win more than three, but "Seven-Up or Bust" is the real objective.

CU offensive tackle Nate Solder, the Rocky Mountain of a man at 6-feet-9, 315 pounds, was among the few excited participants and partisans. "Awesome feeling. It's a great start. . . . There's going to be a lot of ups and downs this season, but you want to start on a positive note," he said.

Colorado likely will have a trio of downs at Oklahoma, Nebraska and Missouri (and maybe a 20th anniversary fifth down), but they'll need plenty of ups against Californians, Hawaiians, Georgians, Texans, Kansans and Iowans.

At the moment, though, the 2010 Rocky Mountain Beatdown was a vast improvement over the 44-0 CU victory against CSU in 1910. Possibly.

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cu football

Buff's defense helped set tone for 24-3 win over CSU

By Terry Frei
The Denver Post

Posted: 09/05/2010 01:00:00 AM MDT



CSU's Matt Yemm loses his grip on the ball Saturday, but the Rams retained possession because the play wasn't ruled a fumble. (Kathryn Scott Osler, The Denver Post)

When the Colorado Buffaloes were herded back from the portal leading to their dressing room at the stadium's southwest corner, and directed across the field to accept the Centennial Cup on

Saturday afternoon, they did so with the collective enthusiasm of students about to receive perfect attendance certificates at a junior high school assembly.

Let's put it this way: Ralphie — the *real* Buffalo — covered the same ground and more a lot faster, both before the game and at halftime.

"It was just that we worked so hard, worked so long, we know we can do better," CU senior defensive end Marquez Herrod said later of the workmanlike, 24-3 victory over Colorado State at Invesco Field at Mile High.

"That

Slide show

[View a gallery of game day photos.](#)

was a good outing," Herrod said. "That's OK for those who were seeing us play for the first time. But we know what we can do, we know what we're capable of, and that wasn't our best game. We can play a lot better. We can play a lot faster. We were happy that we got the win, but we know that we have a lot more potential here."

Herrod and the CU defense helped set the tone, neutralizing the CSU running game.

Rams running back Raymond Carter finished with

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only 10 net yards on 11 carries — and only two of those carries came in the second half, after CU opened up a huge lead and CSU had to all but abandon the running game.

Even disregarding the 12 yards lost on three sacks of Rams freshman quarterback Pete Thomas, CSU still averaged fewer than 3 yards per rush.

The contrast to 2009 was stark: In Boulder a year ago, CSU's largely veteran offensive line was heroic as the Rams took a 20-3 lead and hung on for a 23-17 victory.

"We played physical today," Herrod said. "Last year against these guys, we did very bad up front. They did come out and hit us in the mouth, but we made a lot of mistakes. We weren't in our gaps. Guys weren't filling behind, like they should. We didn't execute the defense.

"Today, we filled the gaps we were supposed to fill, we did our jobs, and everybody did what they were supposed to do. We were very comfortable in our defense, sure of our assignments and played well."

The Buffs' other starting defensive end, Josh Hartigan, said: "It was all about preparation during the week. We knew we had to come out in this game and get off the ball and control the line of scrimmage."

The Rams, not surprisingly given Thomas' true freshman status, stuck with "max" protection

approaches through most of the afternoon, and all three of those sacks came in the final minutes after the game was out of hand.

"Those guys, they hold in seven or eight sometimes," Herrod said. "That's what you game plan for, and that's why we rotated so much upfront. We were trying to keep guys fresh and keep guys ready to rush. If they have so many guys in there, it's hard to get pressure on them. But I think we did an adequate job."

Thomas was 24-of-33 for 196 yards. Although 15 of the 24 completions were to wide receivers, and the CSU passing game can feature slants and short routes, it still was striking that Thomas so rarely went downfield. His longest completion was 18 yards. The longest of his three interceptions was 21 yards beyond the line of scrimmage.

Despite coach Steve Fairchild's game-week assurances that he wouldn't scale back the Rams' offensive ambition or scope because of Thomas' youth and collegiate inexperience, it appeared that happened.

But the lack of a running game added to the challenge for Thomas, and the Buffs' defensive linemen said they were conscious of putting enough pressure on the young quarterback even in those max-protect situations to limit his options.

"With eight guys in there to protect sometimes, we had to get off the ball and control the play

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and not let them look to those deep passes," Hartigan said. "Controlling the line of scrimmage was really the key, and everything fell into place after that."

Terry Frei: 303-954-1895 or tfrei@denverpost.com

Bufs playing better defense

CU's defense had a much better showing Saturday than last season against CSU. A look at some key numbers for the CU defense:

Total yards Passing Rushing 1st downs 3rd-down conversion
 2010 vs. CSU 245 196 49 14 1-of-12
 2009 vs. CSU 376 208 168 14 3-of-14
 2009 opp. season averages 363.0 201.8 161.2
 18.2 4.8-of-14.2

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dave krieger

Krieger: Buffs boost WR arsenal

By Dave Krieger
Denver Post Columnist

Posted: 09/05/2010 01:00:00 AM MDT

It seemed a little odd when junior Colorado quarterback message on Twitter a couple of weeks ago saying ser favorite wide receiver.

Pinpointing a favorite option publicly is something a q even if it's true.

Turns out, he didn't.

"I hijacked his phone," McKnight admitted Saturday at all-time receptions leader in CU's 24-3 romp over Col

McKnight, Hansen tweeted later, "is a big jokester but receivers, one of many this year."

Emphasis on the many. It's been a long time since CL weapons like the one it had in Saturday's season open

Travon Patterson, who took advantage of Southern C CU and become eligible to play immediately, caught a first quarter and fired his turbochargers, gliding into th the Buffs' first touchdown.

That a third-and-15 play call in the red zone could lool increased the wow factor. Patterson also took over CL sprinting 25 yards with one.

Toney Clemons, who sat out a year after transferring i wet with three catches for 25 yards. Throw in Paul Ric recruit, and the Buffs have more athleticism on the ou for some time.

"All three of those new guys out there give them a little Fairchild said. "As soon as we played off (the receiver were able to hit a hitch. That's a much better group of year. That's an advantage for that quarterback and th

He doesn't have to tell McKnight, a standard target of who found himself wide open for his record-breaking i doubled as the game's second touchdown.

"When you have guys as fast as Travon and Toney ar up things for a guy like me, a guy in the slot," McKnig! single those guys up on the outside or we'll run (go) rc people. Having those guys has helped me so much ar

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cu football

Bufs' Parker Orms leaves early with injured knee

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

Posted: 09/05/2010 01:00:00 AM MDT

Football is a brutal sport, and anybody associated with the sport accepts that. But nobody becomes numb to seeing a teammate lying on the turf, clutching his knee and in obvious pain.

Just five minutes into Colorado's 24-3 victory over Colorado State at Invesco Field at Mile High on Saturday, Buffaloes redshirt freshman safety Parker Orms went down while on punt coverage.

It was his first college game.

Orms, CU's starting nickel back, returned to the CU bench on crutches, with an ice bag wrapped around his right knee. Initial X-rays revealed no fracture, but future tests will be conducted to determine whether there was ligament damage, which is what CU fears.

In a cruel twist of fate, Orms had returned to the site of his most joyous moment — where, at

Invesco, he made Wheat Ridge High the 2008 Class 4A state champion by running for a 56-yard touchdown with 19 seconds remaining. Orms said he felt his knee give out while racing downfield toward CSU punt returner Momo Thomas.

There was no contact.

"I made one little cut and part of my leg went one way and part went the other way," Orms said. "It felt like my knee was moving all over the place. I just fell down. It's the worst pain I've ever felt."

Orms, whose older brother, Dylan, was making his first college start Saturday afternoon in Greeley as Northern Colorado's quarterback, was in on CU's first play because the Buffs' defense started out in the nickel.

"I'll still remember this day," he said. "I'll get back."

CU coach Dan Hawkins said he becomes "heartbroken" when a player goes down.

"You're crushed because you know how much that goes into (preparing for a season)," Hawkins said. "Hopefully, he'll be OK. I feel bad when guys get hurt. But there are reasons that things happen. And if you make the most of it, you'll probably come out on the positive side at the end."

Getting his number called as Orms' replacement

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was Travis Sandersfeld, a junior from Limon. Sandersfeld, originally a walk-on who has been put on scholarship, had been mostly a special-teams standout. Now, he may now be the new starting nickel back.

How's this for filling in? Sandersfeld intercepted a pass in second quarter, the first of three by the Bufs against CSU freshman quarterback Pete Thomas. Sandersfeld also was credited with five tackles, including one for a loss.

"It was really a bummer to see Parker go down like that, especially because he's such a competitor and key part of our defense," said CU junior safety Anthony Perkins, who also had an interception. "I hope it's not serious and he gets back.

"But Travis came in and had a pick. That's how it's got to be — people step in and make plays."

Orms said he is confident that Sandersfeld will do just fine.

"Travis did an amazing job," Orms said. "That pick was a great play."

Said Sandersfeld: "That is what we said from the start of the season — at every position we feel like we have depth."

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cu football - briefs

CU's McKnight passes Westbrook to become leading career receiver

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

Posted: 09/05/2010 01:00:00 AM MDT

With all the talk about the speedy newcomers added to Colorado's receiving corps, once again it was dependable senior Scotty McKnight who led everybody in catches Saturday and made it a record-setting afternoon at Invesco Field at Mile High.

McKnight nabbed six passes for 78 yards, including a 27-yard touchdown from junior quarterback Tyler Hansen in the second quarter that put the Buffaloes up 14-0. McKnight's third catch made him CU's career leader, breaking the former mark of 167 receptions by Michael Westbrook from 1991-94.

McKnight has 171 career catches. He had at least one touchdown grab in each of his four games against Colorado State.

This says a lot about McKnight: He preferred to talk scoreboard.

"Don't get me wrong, it's humbling," he said of the receptions record. "But I was more focused on the win. The numbers thing doesn't mean that much to me."

How's this for consistency? McKnight has caught a pass in each of his 38 games as a Buff.

With boyhood pal Mark Sanchez, the New York Jets quarterback, in attendance, McKnight beat CSU cornerback Shaq Bell on a slant pattern and ran untouched into the end zone.

"I told him right before the play, 'One more.' And it just so happened we called his number," Hansen said. "He ran a great route. It was easy."

Flag day.

In one regard, Colorado won in spite of itself. The Buffaloes committed 10 penalties, pushing the Buffs back for a total of 104 yards. Penalties were a season-long problem during last year's 3-9 season.

Apparently, there will be a price to be paid during practice for sloppiness.

"Let's see here. It will be running, running and running," coach Dan Hawkins said. "We'll get on that. . . . It seemed like for a while almost every drive we had to punt because we had a penalty. We have to clean that up."

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THE DENVER POST

Newbies.

Making their first career starts as Buffs were offensive tackle David Bakhtiari, receiver Kyle Cefalo, receiver Toney Clemons, defensive end Josh Hartigan, linebacker Jon Major, safety Parker Orms and tight end DaVaughn Thornton (as a wide receiver).

Mr. Inside, Mr. Outside.

Sophomore Nick Kasa, normally a defensive end by trade, moved inside at times Saturday. "I can just help get some speed in there on passing downs," Kasa said. "I don't prefer any position. I just prefer to play."

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Saturday, September 4, 2010

Quick thoughts on Colorado's win

By David Ubben

- Definitely an impressive [24-3 win for Colorado](#), even though Colorado State isn't on the level of competition the Buffaloes will see for most of this season. After winning just three games last year, beating anyone 24-3 is a great sign for Colorado, who may have convinced a few more folks that all the optimism out of coach Dan Hawkins and the rest of his players is different than what they've been saying for the past few seasons. I'll reserve judgment until we get closer to conference play, but the Buffaloes should be one of the more intriguing teams in the Big 12.
- [Tyler Hansen](#)'s stat line (17-26, 191 yards, 2 TD, INT, 1-yard rush TD) isn't going to make anyone say, "Wow!" but he moved the offense for most of the day, and helped set up [Rodney Stewart](#), who finished with 69 yards on 16 carries. Good sign for Hansen, though, who continued his solid play from last year and should take some good vibes into next week's game against soon-to-be (or perhaps later) Pac-10 roommate, Cal.
- [Scotty McKnight](#) proved once again why he's one of the conference's best, giving Hansen a nice target with six catches for 78 yards and a score. The newbies I wrote about earlier today got off to nice starts, but [Travon Patterson](#) and [Toney Clemons](#) didn't do a lot after Colorado jumped out to a 17-0 lead at halftime. We'll learn more about them if Colorado gets down in nonconference play and Hansen is forced to throw the ball around 40 times.
- This will sound backhanded, but I don't mean it to: I'm very impressed with the three interceptions, even if they came at the expense of true freshman [Pete Thomas](#). Colorado only had nine INTs all of last season, so that's a very good sign for the development of Colorado's defense, which was getting torched this time last year.
- Colorado was very close to Iowa State as having the most impressive debut of any team in the Big 12 so far in Week 1.



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CU silences CSU with decisive win

BY KELLY LYELL • KellyLyell@coloradoan.com •
September 5, 2010

DENVER - There were no celebrations for CSU fans after this year's Rocky Mountain Showdown.

The University of Colorado raced out to a 17-0 halftime lead and never let up, sending the Rams to their 10th consecutive loss.

The scene after the game at Invesco Field at Mile High in Denver was far different than the one that played out a year ago, when several hundred of the 5,000 or so Rams fans in attendance stormed CU's Folsom Field in Boulder to celebrate an unexpected 23-17 CSU victory - the Rams' first in Boulder since 1986.

Many of the 25,000 or so fans wearing the green and gold - and even a little bit of the "throwback" orange - for Colorado State University were gone by the time the final gun sounded Saturday and CU players milled about waiting for the presentation of the Centennial Trophy that goes to the winner.

"Maybe there's a little extra juice for this game, just because they're our rival," said CU receiver Scotty McKnight, a senior who caught a 27-yard touchdown pass in the second quarter to make it 14-0.

McKnight also became the Buffs' all-time receiving leader with that catch, his 168th - one more than Michael Westbrook. McKnight finished with six catches, giving him 171 for his career.

Then, he broke away from an interview session to join his teammates.

"Can I get you guys after?" he asked reporters. "I want to go hold my trophy."

The loss was particularly painful for CSU's Ricky Brewer, a senior linebacker from Denver who didn't get to play in last year's game.

"That is tough," Brewer said. "It's a rivalry game, and that is what it's all about. Any time you come out, you want to beat your rival. The fact that we lost this

one is going to stick with us."

The win was the Buffaloes' 60th win over the Rams in an 82-game series that began in 1893 and their seventh in the past 12 seasons. The two teams had split the previous four games, and nine of the previous 10 had been decided by seven or fewer points.

The Buffs, though, clearly were the better team in this one. CU intercepted three passes thrown by CSU quarterback Pete Thomas, an 18-year-old freshman playing in his first college football game, sacked him three more times and limited the Rams to 49 rushing yards on 25 carries. CSU converted just 1 of 14 third-down plays and was 0 for 2 on fourth downs.

"We didn't get it done," said Steve Fairchild, CSU's third-year coach.

Still, Fairchild and his players found reasons to be optimistic about the remainder of the season. Thomas, the coach said, showed tremendous poise for a freshman playing in his first game; the Rams' revamped offensive line, which is breaking in four new starters, showed promise; and other than two breakdowns in pass coverage that resulted in two CU touchdowns, the defense wasn't as bad as the score indicated.

"I'm very optimistic about the future of this team," Brewer said. "Our goal was to have a 10-win season and go out and win a conference championship, and that still exists today. Losing against your rival

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hurts, but they were the better team."



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Fans cheer Saturday for the CSU Rams during the Rocky Mountain Showdown against the Colorado Buffaloes at Invesco Field at Mile High in Denver. The CSU Rams lost to the Buffaloes 24-3. (Sara Marie Fossum/The Coloradoan)

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Rams struggle to establish ground game

BY KELLY LYELL • KellyLyell@coloradoan.com •
September 5, 2010

DENVER - With no run game to speak of, the University of Colorado was able to turn its defense loose against the pass Saturday.

The Buffs sacked CSU quarterback Pete Thomas, a true freshman playing his first game, three times, forced him to rush two other passes and intercepted him three times in a 24-3 win over the Rams at Invesco Field at Mile High.

The Rams managed just 20 rushing yards on 13 carries in the first half, while falling behind 17-0, and were limited to just 49 yards on 25 carries for the game against a CU defense that came into the game hoping to force Thomas to the air.

Running back Raymond Carter, the Rams' starter, managed just 10 yards on 18 carries and was outgained in the first half by Thomas, who scrambled three times for 9 yards.

"I thought we did a nice job," CU coach Dan Hawkins said. "... Particularly when there was short yardage, and you knew they were going to run it."

CSU coach Steve Fairchild said there were decent holes for his backs to run through, but they never hit them right for a big gain. The Rams' longest run from scrimmage in the first half was a 10-yard scamper by Thomas, and the longest runs, period, were a pair of 16-yarders in the fourth quarter, well after the outcome had been decided, by true freshman Tony Drake.

"We were always one block away from breaking the big one," Carter said. "... We've just got to hold on to our blocks a little more, and I've got to make the right reads on some runs. Once we fix that, then our running game will be on point."

The Rams, Fairchild said, have to fix the run game in a hurry if they hope to have a successful season.

"If we cannot establish a run game, which we didn't do at any point (Saturday) afternoon, or if we don't convert on third downs, than we're going to

struggle offensively," Fairchild said.

> **RAM KILLER** - CU receiver Scotty McKnight, a senior, caught his fourth touchdown pass in as many games against CSU the past four seasons.

His 27-yard TD catch on a pass from quarterback Tyler Hansen also gave him CU's career record for receptions, breaking Michael Westbrook's mark of 167. McKnight finished with six catches for 78 yards, raising his career receptions total to 171.

> **FRESH FACES** - Seven true freshman made their debuts for the Rams.

Besides Thomas and Drake, the Rams also played defensive ends Crockett Gillmore and Nordly Capi, linebackers Mike Orakpo and Charles Favors and cornerback Shaq Bell.

Gillmore and Orakpo had the only two sacks of CU quarterback Tyler Hansen. Orakpo, the younger brother of Washington Redskins defensive end Brian Orakpo, also was called for a questionable roughing-the-passer penalty that led to the Buffs' first touchdown.

Six redshirt freshman also played for the first time for the Rams, including starting guard Weston Richburg. The others were safety Ezra Thompson, tight end/fullback Joe Brown, cornerback Immanuel Mitchell, tackle Jared Biard and tight end Matt Weems.

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CSU also had three transfers play for the first time in a Rams uniform - Carter (UCLA), cornerback Dominique Vinson (Saddleback Community College) and linebacker Austin Gillmore (West Texas A&M). Austin Gillmore is Crockett's older brother.

> ON THE SKIDS - The loss was the 10th in a row for CSU, which hasn't won since defeating Nevada 35-20 on Sept. 19, 2009, to improve to 3-0 on the season. It's the sixth-longest losing streak in school history, but well off the all-time mark of 26 in a row set during the 1909-10 seasons.

> PICKED OFF - CU safeties Travis Sandersfeld and Anthony Perkins and cornerback Jalil Brown all intercepted passes thrown by Thomas, while CSU's Momo Thomas (no relation to Pete) picked off a pass thrown by Hansen.

Momo Thomas' interception came on the very next play after Brown made a nice diving catch for his interception, and the subsequent 20-yard return helped the Rams get into position for a field-goal try on the final play of the first half. The kick, however, was blocked.

> FIRST TIME BACK - CSU linebacker Ricky Brewer, who missed all last season while serving an NCAA suspension after a positive drug test for marijuana, was in on a team-best 10 tackles in his first game back. The Denver native had six solo stops, one tackle behind the line of scrimmage and was credited with one quarterback hurry.

> HAPPY RETURNS - Thomas also returned three punts for 44 yards and finished with a team-best 64 all-purpose yards. CU's Travon Patterson, a transfer from Southern California, had four punt returns for 46 yards.

> INJURIES - CSU defensive end Eugene Daniels didn't suit up because of a previously undisclosed shoulder injury, and CU safety Parker Orms, a freshman, left the game after making a tackle early in the first quarter with a right knee injury.

Orms said afterward he would undergo an MRI today to determine the severity of the injury.

"Nothing is broken, but there is some bruising," Orms said.

> NEXT UP - CSU is on the road for its next two games, traveling to Reno to play Nevada at 8:30 p. m. Saturday and to Oxford, Ohio, for a Sept. 18 game against Miami (Ohio).



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CSU linebacker Ricky Brewer (56) walks off the field after the Rams lost their season opener to Colorado, 24-3. It was Brewer's first game back since his suspension last season. (Dawn Madura/The Coloradoan)

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[CSU loses 24-3 to CU at Invesco Field](#)

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Longmont, Colorado
Monday, September 06,
2010

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Sweet Victory

By Brian Howell
© 2010 Longmont Times-Call

DENVER — By no means is the University of Colorado football team where it ultimately wants to be.

Yet on Saturday afternoon at Invesco Field at Mile High, the Buffs took a step in the right direction.

Quarterback Tyler Hansen threw a pair of touchdown passes, the defense picked off three passes, and CU rolled to a 24-3 win over rival Colorado State.

“We did a good job today,” said safety Anthony Perkins, who had one of the three interceptions. “There’s still a lot of things that we have to correct for next week. We just have to make sure we get better every day and every single week. But today we came out and played a pretty good game.”

After beginning the 2009 season at 0-2, including a surprising loss to CSU in Boulder, the Buffs needed this start.

“It’s better than a loss, that’s for sure,” CU head coach Dan Hawkins said. “I thought our defense played really, really well. At times we played well on offense. Winning and winning against your rival and starting the season on a winning note is a positive.”

Throughout the offseason, the Buffs (1-0) talked about their desire to start strong — unlike last year when they were completely outplayed in their first two games. They got what they wanted this time.

Hansen threw two first-half touchdown passes — to Travon Patterson and Scotty McKnight — and Aric Goodman added a 28-yard field goal as the Buffs went into halftime with a 17-0 lead.

Hansen added a 1-yard touchdown run in the third quarter to give the Buffs a 24-0 lead. CSU (0-1) finally got on the board early in the fourth quarter with a 43-yard field goal by Ben DeLine.

The first big turning point came early, when the Rams gambled. They had a fourth-and-1 situation at their own 44 midway through the first quarter. Instead of punting, they ran the ball, but T.J. Borcky was hit for no gain by Perkins and Jon Major.

“Obviously that one backfired,” CSU head coach Steve Fairchild said. “I knew that as young as we were, manufacturing long drives was going to be a challenge. I thought we’d do it better than we did this afternoon. But it’s short



CU's Scotty McKnight runs through the back of the endzone after scoring his team's second touchdown of the game against CSU in the second quarter Saturday at Invesco Field at Mile High. **Lewis Geyer/Times-Call**

Colorado 24, Colorado State 3

at Invesco Field at Mile High

Colorado (1-0, 0-0)

71070—24

Colorado State (0-1, 0-0)

0003—3

First Quarter

CU — Patterson 18 pass from Hansen (Goodman kick), 6:03..

Second Quarter

CU — McKnight 27 pass from Hansen (Goodman kick), 8:49.

CU — Goodman 28 field goal, 4:07..

Third Quarter

CU — Hansen 1 run (Goodman kick), 1:55.

yardage; we should win that nine times out of 10. I'll have to look at the tape, but in retrospect, that's a bad call."

CU took advantage. Hansen moved the Buffs down the field and then connected with Patterson on a crossing pattern in the middle of the field. Patterson used his speed to take the ball 18 yards into the end zone for a 7-0 CU lead.

The Buffs also blocked a field goal just before halftime. That gave them momentum going into the locker room.

"You've got to be able to generate a few of those," Hawkins said. "A little momentum and a little confidence goes a long way."

Hansen displayed confidence under center. For the first time in his three years in Boulder, he was named the starting quarterback to start the season. He looked poised and comfortable in leading the Buffs, finishing 17-for-25 for 192 yards, two touchdowns and an interception on a long pass.

"He missed a couple of throws, but he made some, too," Hawkins said. "It's never going to be perfect, but I thought he played really well."

Hansen targeted nine different receivers on his 14 first-half throws. For the day, eight different Buffs caught passes.

"I thought we moved the ball pretty good, but there's always stuff to clean up and we have to get better for next week," Hansen said.

That was the basic message from the Buffs following the game. Sure, they were happy to get the win and beat their rivals. But after four consecutive losing seasons, the Buffs are looking for more. Many of them were already talking about the next game — on Saturday at California.

"I'm taking it one game at a time right now," McKnight said. "My new goal is to beat Cal. "

Brian Howell can be reached at bhowell@times-call.com. Read his [Buffs blog](#).

Fourth Quarter

CSU — DeLine 43 field goal, 9:36.

CUCSU

First downs

x1814

Rushes-Yards

35-11525-49

Passing Yards

192196

Comp-Att-Int

17-25-124-33-3

Return Yards

5564

Punts-Avg.

7-41.46-40.7

Fumbles-Lost

1-01-0

Penalties-yards

10-1042-35

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING — CU: Stewart 16-67, Torres 5-26, Clemons 1-10, Lockridge 4-6, Patterson 1-4, Hansen 8-2. CSU: Drake 2-32, R.Carter 11-10, P.Thomas 8-7, T.Borcky 2-3, Greenwood 1-(minus 1), Mason 1-(minus 2).

PASSING (comp-att-int-yards) — CU: Hansen 17-25-1-192. CSU: P.Thomas 24-33-3-196.

RECEIVING — CU: McKnight 6-78, Clemons 3-25, Stewart 2-41, Cefalo 2-16, Patterson 1-18, Richardson 1-11, Jefferson 1-5, Lockridge 1-(minus 2). CSU: Steele 4-54, Liggett 3-27, Yemm 3-27, Mosure 3-22, T.Borcky 3-17, Peitz 2-19, Law 2-18, R.Carter 2-8, Pauga 2-4.

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Longmont, Colorado
Monday, September 06,
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Buffaloes a whole new team

By Brian Howell
© 2010 Longmont Times-Call

DENVER — In recent years, University of Colorado football wins have often been followed by fans flooding the field in celebration.

Wins haven't been easy to come by, so when they do, the Buffs go nuts.

Saturday's 24-3 win over Colorado State was different. Oh, the Buffs enjoyed it. But they didn't act as if they had just won the Big 12 title.

Of course, playing at Invesco Field at Mile High had something to do with that. Fans aren't allowed to spill onto the field there, as they can at Folsom Field in Boulder. But the CU players were toned down in their celebration, too.

"We're a more mature team," quarterback Tyler Hansen said.

"It's great to hoist that trophy up and celebrate, but I was telling the guys, let's beat Cal now."

Perhaps Saturday was a sign that the 2010 Buffaloes are a much different team than they have been over the past four years.

This was CU's fifth season opener under head coach Dan Hawkins. They had lost two of the previous four and had to go to overtime to win in 2007. This was the first season opener in the Hawkins era in which the outcome seemed secure by halftime. CU led 17-0 at the half on Saturday and was never threatened from that point.

"It feels good to get the win, definitely," Hansen said. "There's a lot of pressure to get a win, and all the talk about last year and the pressure's on us to get some wins. It felt really good to get out there and kind of have control of the game from early on."

The Buffs needed a start like this. They got off to a horrible start in 2009 and finished the season 3-9. Winning on Saturday, and doing it in relatively easy fashion, was a welcome sight for CU.

"It's a really good momentum boost," senior Anthony Perkins said. "We really wanted to come out and get this first game and start the season off on the right foot. It's good to be undefeated."

Now the Buffs have to figure out how to keep that momentum going. Next up is a trip to Berkeley, Calif., to take on Cal. That won't be easy.

On Saturday, however, the Buffs backed up some of their preseason talk. They felt all along they were a better team than in 2009; they just needed to go out and prove it. One game into the season, they have done that.

Then again, it's only one game. And, for the 2010 Buffaloes, that's nothing to go nuts about.

"It means a lot, but we have a big schedule and we have a lot more teams (to face)," running back Rodney Stewart said. "If we lose next week, this one means nothing."

Brian Howell can be reached at bhowell@times-call.com. Read his [Buffs blog](#).

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Orms debut leaves him in crutches

By Brian Howell
© 2010 Longmont Times-Call

DENVER — In an instant, Parker Orms' season went from promising to devastating.

Less than 5 minutes into his collegiate debut with the University of Colorado, Orms was injured covering a punt. The redshirt freshman from Wheat Ridge said after the game that doctors believe he tore the ACL in his right knee, an injury that would end his season.

"They think (its the ACL), but not for sure," said Orms, who was on the field with crutches following Colorado's 24-3 win over Colorado State on Saturday. "I'm going to do an MRI when I get back and we'll see what happens."

Orms is CU's starting nickel back on defense. He made his presence known early, pressuring CSU quarterback Pete Thomas into an incompletion on the first play of the game.

A few minutes later, Orms was playing on the punt team when he ran down to cover the kick and got hurt.

"I just thought coming in that this was going to be the greatest day of my football career and it ended up being the worst," he said. "I'm going to have to just work hard getting back and cheer on my teammates. I'm glad they got the win."

If he applies for a medical redshirt, Orms could still have four seasons to play for the Buffs.

"That's the only thing that's keeping me from breaking down," he said.

In his place, junior Travis Sandersfeld played well for CU. He had five tackles, including one for a loss, and picked off a CSU pass.

"He did a great job," Orms said. "I was telling him how proud I was of him."

The Buffs had high hopes for Orms this season but will probably have to wait until 2011 to see him on the field again.

"There are reasons everything happens, and if you make the most of it, you'll probably come out on the positive sign in the end," head coach Dan Hawkins said of Orms' injury.

WATCHING THOMAS: The Buffs intercepted CSU true freshman quarterback Pete Thomas three times on Saturday. They also sacked him three times. "It's all about getting pressure on the quarterback," said CU safety Anthony Perkins, who had an interception. "If the quarterback doesn't feel comfortable in the backfield, he's not where he needs to be." Buffs cornerback Jalil Brown said the pressure by the CU defensive line made life easier for the secondary. "They got a lot of pressure on (Thomas)," Brown said. "He couldn't sit back there and read where he wanted to. His first look was where he had to go with the ball. We went where he first looked and we were able to get turnovers." Brown said the Buffs didn't necessarily attack Thomas because he was a freshman. But he said the Buffs took advantage of Thomas' youth. "We were expecting them to start to try to run the ball, and if they couldn't, they would try to force some passes in there and that's exactly what they did," Brown said. "They tried to revert to the pass."

Having a freshman quarterback, he showed some tendencies of a freshman — not looking off his receivers, not looking to where he wasn't going to throw the ball. We were able to pick up on that and get three turnovers.”

ON THE RUN: CU was one of the worst rushing teams in the country last season. The Buffs didn't exactly rip through CSU's defense on Saturday, but they looked better. Rodney Stewart finished with 67 yards on 16 carries and the team finished with 115 yards on 35 attempts. A year ago, the Buffs had 29 yards on 21 carries against CSU. “We did OK, I think, when we really wanted to,” Hawkins said. “I thought in general we ran the ball decently.”

STRONG START: Kicker Aric Goodman could not have asked for a better start to his season. The senior's career has been marked by inconsistent play. But on Saturday, he kicked all three of his extra points, as well as a 28-yard field goal. He was also great on kickoffs, sending three of his five out of the end zone and another one into the end zone. “He's a guy that's taken a lot of heat for a couple of years,” Hawkins said. “You bring in a bunch of guys and challenge him and he really has answered. I think he's really perfected his game and matured a lot.”

EXTRA POINTS: CU held the Rams to 49 rushing yards on 25 carries. ... Stewart had 108 all-purpose yards for the Buffs (67 rushing, 41 receiving). ... Jon Major led the Buffs with a career-high eight tackles. ... CSU converted just one of 12 third-down opportunities. ... CU leads the all-time series 60-20-2. ... Five true freshman played for CU: Jered Bell, Ryan Iverson, Paul Richardson, Justin Torres and Chidera Uzo-Diribe. ... When CU's Travon Patterson, a fifth-year senior, scored the first touchdown of the day, it was his first touchdown since 2005, when he was in high school.

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McKnight breaks receptions records

By Brian Howell

© 2010 Longmont Times-Call

DENVER — Scotty Mc-Knight hasn't forgotten what happened when Colorado played Colorado State in 2009. McKnight isn't likely to forget the 2010 CU-CSU matchup, either. CU's senior receiver suffered a concussion against the Rams last year, and then watched as the Rams celebrated a 23-17 win. He made up for it on Saturday, catching six passes for 78 yards and a touchdown. He now has 171 career receptions, breaking the previous school record of 167, set by Michael Westbrook from 1991-94. "It means a lot," McKnight said of the record. "Obviously to be up there in that category, that's huge. It's a testament to my hard work, but coming into the first game, all I really wanted was the win. "Getting that win was the first and foremost thing on my list, especially how the game went last year. I got knocked out and we lost and they stomped on Ralphie on the 50-yard line. There was a revenge factor there I wanted to take care of my senior year." McKnight, who has a school-record streak of 38 consecutive games with at least one catch, also has a chance to break the school's career yardage mark. He now has 1,978 for his career, 570 behind Westbrook. The senior from California said he'll worry about all that later, however. "(The numbers), it doesn't really mean too much to me," he said. "It's not fun waking up every day realizing that your team is letting down the school and your community. I'm much more focused on wins and taking care of business so we can get this school back on the map." McKnight had quite a fan club in the stands Saturday. His family was on hand, and so was his childhood pal — Mark Sanchez, the starting quarterback for the New York Jets. Brian Howell can be reached at bhowell@times-call.com. Read his Buffs blog at www.timescall.com/blogs/howell.