

Hawkins: Cal presents significantly tougher competition for CU Buffs

By Kyle Ringo, Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 09/07/2010 02:29:57 PM MDT

The second game of the season this week at California represents a significant step up in competition for the Colorado football team, coach Dan Hawkins and several players said Tuesday.

The Buffs returned to the practice fields Tuesday morning breathing smoke-filled air from the nearby Fourmile Fire burning in the mountains west of Boulder. Hawkins, quarterback Tyler Hansen and senior cornerback Jalil Brown met with reporters at the team's weekly noon press conference afterward.

Hawkins said the biggest difference between the season opener against Colorado State and the first road game of the season at Cal will be dealing with the speed of the Golden Bears.

"Their D-line is very, very explosive and they will attack you," Hawkins said. "I mean, they've got great team speed everywhere on defense. It's not just big guys inside. They're very aggressive the way they come at you. Then obviously on offense they have some weapons and all their skill guys can run. That will definitely be a step up."

Hansen has played in each of the past two seasons but has never experienced a road win with the Buffs, who have lost 11 straight true road games under Hawkins dating back to October 2007. Hansen and Brown said the Buffs are tired of losing on the road and believe they are primed to put an end to the road-losing streak.

"I think this year we have a lot of guys who are leaders on the team," Brown said. "It wasn't the case last year, there was a few here and there, but there are so many guys out here who create a spark. Last year the season didn't really go that well as you can tell. A lot of guys, we got a win and so many guys were so hyped up and excited about that win, they were stuck on that."

"... This year I think guys are a lot more confident in realizing that we can be really good this year and they realize that you've got to come prepared."

Brown noted the score of Cal's season opener, a 52-3 victory over Hawkins' alma mater UC Davis.

"We realize we've got to bring it with them," he said. "We can't roll in there and kind of hope for a win and wait for them to kind of bring it to us. We've got to come right away and take it to them."

Hansen and many other Buffs who came to CU from cities and towns in California are eager for a homecoming of sorts this week, playing one of the flagship universities in the state and a Pac-10 school. Hansen noted his father, Rick, also had the opportunity to play against the Bears in Memorial Stadium when he was the starting quarterback at San Diego State in the 1980s.

"It is a lot tougher challenge," Hansen said. "Defensively, they're really good and they're really fast. So it's a real good test for our offense to see where we're at. I'm looking forward to it, especially going back to California. ... I'll have a lot of family and friends there. So I'm looking forward to playing in front of those guys."

CU is expecting at least 7,000 Buffs fans at the game.

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Woelk: Buffs say trek to Cal a 'business trip'

By Neill Woelk Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 09/07/2010 11:53:24 PM MDT

The Colorado Buffaloes say they're "sick and tired" of the road losing streak that's hanging around their collective necks.

We'll see just how sick and how tired they actually are this weekend.

Saturday's matchup at Cal isn't the game CU fans -- or coaches, for that matter -- would pick as the ideal spot to end the Buffs' road woes. This might not be the best team Cal has fielded in recent years, but it's still a good one.

But when it comes to protecting their home turf, the Bears are very good: Cal is 34-6 at Memorial Stadium over its last 40 games, dating back to the final two home games of 2003. That stretch is even more impressive when you figure that the Bears are a perfect 34-0 in that period against teams not named Oregon State or Southern Cal.

In other words, the Bears are quite comfortable at home -- and quite successful.

The Buffs, meanwhile, have been neither comfortable nor successful at any stadium not named Folsom Field.

So what's different this year? Why should anyone believe this weekend's game at Cal will be any different than the last 12 times CU has played on the road?

"We have a lot of guys who are leaders," said cornerback Jalil Brown. "We realize this is not a vacation. It's a business trip. We're going there to win ... not to see California."

Experience is supposed to be one of the Buffs' strengths this year.

But the number of Buffs who have actually experienced a road win is scant. In fact, only eight players on CU's current roster saw time on the field the last time the Buffs won a true road game (Oct. 27, 2007, at Texas Tech).

Since then, they've gained experience only on the losing end.

But throughout fall camp and after the first win, we've heard that this is a different Buff team -- and maybe it is.

While nobody is going to mistake Colorado State for Cal, the Buffs did go to Invesco Field last weekend and take care of business. Equally important, when they won, they didn't act as if they'd just won a national championship.

Instead, they acted as if they were supposed to win.

There was a level of maturity this program hasn't seen for years.

"It wasn't a surprise that we went out there and won," Brown said. "We were ready. When you are prepared, there's nothing to be nervous about. It's like studying for a test. If you study like you are supposed to, you'll do well on that test."

But saying the right things and doing the right things are two very different animals. Buff coach Dan Hawkins still remembers last season, when the Buffs knocked off nationally ranked and unbeaten Kansas in Boulder -- then went to Manhattan, Kan., a week later and fell flat on their collective faces in a loss to Kansas State.

"You have to understand that sense of urgency," Hawkins said. "There has to be a little finer focus when you go on the road."

It will certainly take all of that and more for the Buffs to win at Cal.

"We're older, we're more experienced and we know what it's like on the road," quarterback Tyler Hansen said. "It's nothing new to us."

And along with that experience, the Buffs also have some confidence, earned by an opening win.

That was a commodity in short supply a year ago.

"Last year, confidence just wasn't there," Brown said. "You'd wonder if the offense was going to show up, or if the defense was going to show up."

"But now we know we're a good team and we know we can have a great season. When you get a win, it just takes it to another level."

Indeed -- and the Buffs can take that next step by taking care of business on Saturday.

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CU's Sandersfeld steps in for Orms

By Kyle Ringo Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 09/07/2010 11:50:09 PM MDT

Travis Sandersfeld is the anti-Allen Iverson. He loves practice and makes the most of it.

The junior defensive back from Limon came on as a replacement in the season opener for Colorado against Colorado State after starting nickel back Parker Orms suffered a season-ending knee injury. Sandersfeld made an interception and finished with the third most tackles on the team, including one stop for loss.

"It was pretty much just practice," Sandersfeld said. "Coaches put me in situations during practice. Parker would go ones and they put in twos and I've been doing it all camp. It's just getting practice. Practice makes perfect."

Sandersfeld is now the starting nickel back because of Orms' misfortune. It wasn't the way he wanted to earn the opportunity but he is hoping to make the most of it even though he will likely share playing time at the position with fellow junior Jonathan Hawkins.

Sandersfeld was able to go into the game when his number was called and play with confidence because he had seen sporadic action earlier in his career. He has been a strong special teams contributor the past two seasons. While coaches and teammates don't necessarily refer to him as Mr. Dependable, they certainly think of him that way.

"If we asked him to go play corner, he'd do it cause he knows it," secondary coach Ashley Ambrose said. "If we asked him to play safety, he'd play safety. He's just one of those guys. He knows everything about it, the defense, and he can run."

Sandersfeld dreamed his whole life of playing for the Buffs. He rooted for CU throughout his childhood growing up on the eastern plains. His favorite player was former CU running back Chris Brown.

He was a dominant athlete at the high school level playing most plays in most games on both sides of the ball as a quarterback and a defensive back. His experience as a high school quarterback has helped him at times as a defensive back in college, even though the game is much faster with more complicated schemes.

Tedford wary of Buffs

California coach Jeff Tedford said his team will get a much tougher game this week than their Week 1 opponent was able to provide. The Bears beat UC Davis 52-3.

"This week will be a new test," Tedford said. "Colorado has some big, physical offensive linemen."

Speaking on the Pac-10 Conference coaches' teleconference, Tedford spoke highly of CU quarterback Tyler Hansen and his receiving corps. He also is impressed with senior cornerbacks Jimmy Smith and Jalil Brown.

Tedford said he was happy to hear earlier this summer the Buffs were joining the conference in 2011 or 2012.

"I think it's a great addition. No question about that," he said. "They're formidable athletically and a very good football team. My understanding is they're a very good academic school as well. So that's a good fit for the Pac-10."

CU coaches familiar with Cal QB

If Colorado coach Dan Hawkins had his way, Cal quarterback Kevin Riley might have been a Buff. Hawkins recruited the senior from Portland, Ore., and knows Riley's father.

Riley is among the most successful quarterbacks in the nation coming into the 2010 season. He has thrown for 40 touchdowns and more than 5,000 yards, including statistics from the opener.

"We recruited the heck out of Kevin when he was coming out of high school," Hawkins said. "I know his dad, and I think he is a very, very good player, a very competitive guy, a very smart guy and very heady guy."

Line dancing

CU offensive line coach Denver Johnson said Shawn Daniels was pushing senior Keenan Stevens for the starting center job before suffering a foot injury in the season opener. Daniels was in a boot Tuesday and it's unclear when he will return to play.

Johnson said competition continues at left guard and right tackle. Juniors Ethan Adkins and Mike Iltis are competing for the job at guard. Adkins was the starter there most of last season and again against CSU, but Iltis played, too.

Johnson was pleased with redshirt freshman David Bakhtiari's performance in his first college action against the Rams. Bryce Givens also was able to play and is returning to health, which could mean Givens becomes the starter at right tackle again and Bakhtiari moves to guard.

"He did, I thought, amazingly well for a rookie," Johnson said of Bakhtiari. "I thought he held up amazingly well. I thought he had a good ball game. I think he is the right kind of guy with the right kind of makeup. It looked like it was old hat to him."

Redshirt updates

Hawkins said he believes sophomore defensive tackle Nate Bonsu will redshirt this season as he continues to recover from offseason knee surgery.

Offensive lineman Eric Richter also is expected to redshirt after transferring from a junior college. He has three seasons to play two.

Hawkins said senior wide receiver Andre Simmons probably won't redshirt.

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colorado briefs

Cal freshman sure to catch CU's attention

Posted: 09/08/2010 01:00:00 AM MDT

BOULDER — It's a good thing the Colorado football team has game tape of California's 52-3, opening-game victory over Cal-Davis. Otherwise, Bears freshman wide receiver Keenan Allen might blow by the Buffaloes' secondary without CU realizing the burst he has.

All the former five-star recruit did in his first college game was catch four passes for 120 yards and a touchdown, rush three times for 38 yards and another touchdown, and return a kickoff 18 yards.

Colorado (1-0) plays California (1-0) on Saturday in Berkeley. The Buffs' defense had better account for the explosive newcomer.

"(Allen) looked great on film," CU senior cornerback Jalil Brown said Tuesday. "You could tell he was confident he was going to make some plays."

Allen, 6-feet-3 and 195 pounds, is from Greensboro, N.C., and originally gave an oral

commitment to Alabama before switching to Cal on national signing day in February. [Rivals.com](#) ranked him No. 5 among the nation's top prospects for all positions.

California coach Jeff Tedford said Tuesday during his weekly news conference in Berkeley that he was not surprised by Allen's spectacular debut.

"He's a very good football player, no question about it," Tedford said. "It's one game, though, so we have to make sure not to get too carried away with it."

Speaking Tuesday during his media luncheon in Boulder, CU coach Dan Hawkins said California possesses top-shelf speed throughout its roster.

"They have great team speed everywhere on defense. And obviously on offense they've got some weapons," Hawkins said.

Friendly cheers.

Colorado has sold out its allotment of 4,000 tickets for Saturday's road game. CU officials expect 7,000 or more Buffs fans in Cal's Memorial Stadium, including CU supporters who purchase tickets through regular outlets.

"It will be nice for our guys to have some sliver of support," Hawkins said. "I think all that stuff helps you."

Familiar face.

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Hawkins doesn't need to call around to get a feel for Cal senior quarterback Kevin Riley. Hawkins knows him and his family well. Hawkins tried to sign the 6-2, 224-pounder, who played high school football in the Portland, Ore., area.

"I think he's a very, very good player and a very competitive guy, a very smart guy," Hawkins said. "I think he's highly underrated."

Footnotes.

Hawkins said redshirt freshman punter Zach Grossnickle will continue to use the rugby-style technique on occasion. "I think anytime you move the pocket, that gives the (opponent's) punt return team something to think about," the CU coach said. "(Grossnickle) actually kicks it better that way." . . . Hawkins said sophomore defensive tackle Nate Bonsu and junior guard Eric Richter likely will redshirt this season. Bonsu is still recovering from knee surgery. Richter is among eight junior offensive linemen on the CU roster and this will help even out the class numbers.

Tom Kensler, The Denver Post

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cu

Hawkins, Buffs wary of Cal's speed

By Tom Kensler

The Denver Post

Posted: 09/07/2010 02:34:08 PM MDT

Updated: 09/08/2010 06:06:11 AM MDT

BOULDER — Speaking Tuesday during his weekly media luncheon, Colorado coach Dan Hawkins said California's team speed has the attention of the CU staff.

The Bears (1-0) play at a faster gear than Colorado State did on Saturday against the Buffaloes.

"Yeah, a lot (faster)," Hawkins said. "On defense, particularly, their D-line is very, very explosive, and they will attack you. They have great team speed everywhere on defense, it's not just (having) big guys inside. They're very aggressive the way they come at you.

"Obviously, on offense they've got some weapons. All their skill guys can run. That will definitely be a step up (from CSU's team speed)."

Friendly fans. Colorado has sold out its allotment of 4,000 tickets for Saturday road game. CU officials expect 7,000 or more Buff

fans in attendance, including CU supporters who purchased tickets through regular outlets.

"It's nice to have at least some voice in the crowd, for sure," Hawkins said. "(In most road games) you make a spectacular play and it's deathly quiet. But if (the opponent) makes a good play, it's overwhelmingly yelling.

"It will be nice for our guys to have some sliver of support. I think all that stuff helps you."

Familiar face. Hawkins doesn't need to call around to get a feel for California's senior quarterback, Kevin Riley. Hawkins knows him and his family well.

A 6-foot-2, 224-pounder, Riley played high school football in the Portland, Ore., area. He was a recruiting target of CU.

"We recruited the heck out of Kevin out of high school," Hawkins said. "I think he's a very, very good player and a very competitive guy, a very smart guy, a very heady. I think he's highly underrated."

Riley threw for 258 yards and three touchdowns with no interceptions Saturday in the 52-3 romp over UC Davis. Riley gave way to his backup early in the second half.

Rugby anyone? Hawkins said to expect redshirt-freshman punter Zach Grossnickle to continue to use the rugby-style technique for at least some of his punts.

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"We were a little inconsistent in that," Hawkins said of the season opener against CSU. "But I think anytime you move pocket, that gives the (opponent's) punt return team something to think about. (But) I think you have to make sure you fit it right."

"(Grossnickle) actually kicks it better that way," Hawkins added. "I think it's a more natural stroke for him. So it's good for him. For (the team), we just need him to directionally spread the thing around a little bit."

Redshirting. Hawkins said sophomore defensive tackle Nate Bonsu and junior offensive guard Eric Richter likely will redshirt this season.

Bonsu is coming off knee surgery. Richter, a junior-college transfer, is among eight junior offensive linemen on the roster. Holding Richter back a year will help even out the class numbers.

Trio to replace Orms. Junior safety Tyler Sandersfeld will be the primary replacement at nickel back for Parker Orms, the redshirt-freshman from Wheat Ridge who was lost for the season with a torn ACL of his right knee early in the first quarter of the 24-3 victory over Colorado State on Saturday. But Dan Hawkins said juniors Jonathan Hawkins and Patrick Mahnke also could be used as the nickel.

Jonathan Hawkins is listed as a cornerback. Mahnke is a 6-1, 205-pound linebacker, having switched from safety during spring drills.

Dan Hawkins nodded an affirmative when asked if that meant Orms would be replaced "by committee."

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All Things Colorado Sports — Blogs — The Denver Post

SEPTEMBER 8, 2010, 9:01 AM

CU's Hawkins made call on string of runs

By **TOM KENSLE** |  No Comments

BOULDER — Colorado junior tailback Rodney Stewart carried the ball five consecutive times to begin the Buffs' first possession of the second quarter Saturday in the 24-3 victory over Colorado State. CU coach Dan Hawkins said that was his call.

"I don't try to tread on coach (Eric) Kiesau's territory (as offensive coordinator) a whole bunch," Hawkins said. "But I was pretty adamant on the headset. I think our backs and offensive line need an opportunity to feel it. And I think they were feeling it at that point.

"It's good for those guys to get in a rhythm and get some confidence and get some things going."

The drive culminated with CU's second touchdown, a 27-yard pass from Tyler Hansen to Scotty McKnight.

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- [CU's Hansen: Quiet trips home getting old](#) ^[2]
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All Things Colorado Sports — Blogs — The Denver Post

SEPTEMBER 7, 2010, 4:48 PM

CU's Hansen: Quiet trips home getting old

By **TOM KENSLE** |  No Comments

BOULDER — Colorado has lost 12 straight true road games, and have dropped 13 in a row outside the State of Colorado, including the 2007 Independence Bowl loss to Alabama.

The only true road wins during the four-plus seasons under Dan Hawkins were 2007 wins at Baylor and at Texas Tech.

CU junior quarterback Tyler Hansen said he's growing more than tired of quiet trips home after road losses.

"To go on road trips and to fall short most every time, that's really rough," Hansen said. "I'll tell you what, that plane ride home is no fun.

"We always want to sing the fight song in the plane coming home. We haven't done that in a while."

Saturday afternoon's CU game at California in Berkeley will mark the first trip to the state of California for the Buffs since winning 31-17 win over UCLA on Sept. 21, 2002 in the Bruins' home stadium, the Rose Bowl.

This will mark CU's first trip to Berkeley since 1968, a 10-0 Buffs loss.

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All Things Colorado Sports — Blogs — The Denver Post

SEPTEMBER 7, 2010, 2:31 PM

CU's Hawkins not yet concerned with Pac-10

By **TOM KENSLE** |  1 Comment

BOULDER – Colorado coach Dan Hawkins preaches to his team to not look past the upcoming game and apparently he is taking the same approach this week, even with California being a future conference foe of the Buffs when the Pac-10 becomes the Pac-12, either next year or in 2012.

“I think we have to just look at it as a game against Cal,” Hawkins said Tuesday during his weekly media luncheon.

“We’re not in that league right now. We’re still in the Big 12 and have to compete in the Big 12.

“For us, it’s not so much that we’re trying to make a statement in the Big 12 (or Pac-10/Pac-12). It’s that we’re trying to make a statement this week, this game.”

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Tough challenge ahead

By Brian Howell
© 2010 Longmont Times-Call

BOULDER — Beating Colorado State in the season opener isn't going to give the University of Colorado football team a big head.

The Buffs know their next challenge is even tougher. On Saturday, CU (1-0) will travel to Berkeley, Calif., to take on Cal (1-0).

"It is a lot tougher challenge," CU junior quarterback Tyler Hansen said.

CU knocked off its rival 24-3 on Saturday. Meanwhile, Cal crushed UC-Davis 52-3.

Although unranked, Cal is used to winning. The Bears have been to a bowl game in seven straight seasons and have never finished with a losing record in coach Jeff Tedford's eight years at the school.

That's quite a difference from facing a CSU team that has now lost 10 straight games.

"It's going to be a lot different," CU linebacker B.J. Beatty said. "Cal is a more explosive team (than CSU), and they have more athletes on their team.

"It's a road game, which obviously in the past everyone says has been a little kryptonite for us."

That's an understatement. Colorado has lost 13 straight games when leaving its home state, dating back to a 31-26 win at Texas Tech in 2007.

Since Dan Hawkins took over as head coach in 2006, the Buffs are 2-20 when leaving the state. Both wins came in 2007.

Hansen and senior cornerback Jalil Brown both said this year's squad is better equipped to handle a road trip, however.

"We're older; we're experienced," Hansen said. "Most of the guys have seen road games, have been to away stadiums. It's nothing new to us."

Brown said that in past years, the Buffs' youth has been evident on the road because the players acted like tourists. Not this time, he said.

"You realize when you go on the road it's not a vacation; it's a business trip," Brown said. "We're going there to win. We're not going there to see California or see Cal's stadium. We're going there to go show them we're a great team and show the world that we are and get a win."



CU quarterback Tyler Hansen steps back for a pass against CSU in the first quarter Saturday at Invesco Field at Mile High. **Lewis Geyer/Times-Call**

It should help the Buffs that they'll have a decent number of CU fans on hand. CU has a large alumni base on the West Coast, and its allotment of 4,000 tickets was sold out almost a month ago. CU officials believe there could be as many as 7,000 Buffaloes fans in Cal's Memorial Stadium, which seats a bit more than 72,000.

"I'm sure you'll still have the overwhelming support for them, but it'll be nice for our guys to have a little sliver of support," Hawkins said. "I think all that stuff helps you emotionally."

Hansen certainly can't wait. He grew up in Southern California but said he will have a lot of family and friends on hand as he plays his first college game in his home state.

"That's a good amount of fans," Hansen said of the expected 7,000 CU faithful. "Especially with our struggles on the road, if we have a lot of our fans there, it'll feel more like a home game a little bit and we'll be a lot more comfortable."

Getting his team to be comfortable is, perhaps, the biggest trick for Hawkins this week.

"I just think you have to buckle down a little bit more and you have to understand that sense of urgency and how to handle all those things," Hawkins said of the distractions on the road. "You have to play a football game, but I do think there has to be a little bit finer focus when you go on the road."

Knowing the strength of their opponent should help the Buffs keep that focus, Beatty said.

"We just need to take all that momentum and keep it going, just roll it into this week," he said. "Cal is a great team, and we just have to up our game that much more."

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

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Sipili, Beatty big hits at Colorado

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Sep 08, 2010



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Senior linebacker Michael Sipili is on the prowl for the Colorado Buffaloes again this year.

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It doesn't matter if it's a quarterback, a fullback or an offensive lineman.

If you're in the way of Colorado linebackers B.J. Beatty and Michael Sipili, you're going to get hit -- hard.

The two seniors bring a toughness to the field that the entire Buffaloes defense feeds off.

Beatty (Kahuku '06), who started all 10 games he played as a junior, was the Iron Buffalo Award winner among the team's linebackers for hard work, dedication and toughness.

Sipili, a 2006 Damien graduate, has also worked his way into the starting lineup after a strong junior season.

Together, the two are a big part of a Colorado defense that got off to a great start in 2010, holding rival Colorado State to just three points on Saturday.

"That was a big thing for us to start off the season right," Beatty said. "CSU came into our place and beat us last year, so we wanted to make a statement that we're not a team that's going to get pushed around anymore."

That toughness begins with Beatty and Sipili, who are two of the hardest hitters on the team.

Following in the footsteps of former Buffaloes linebacker Jordon Dizon, now with the Detroit Lions, both seniors continue a tradition of Hawaii players at Colorado that bring a physical presence to the team.

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"I think a lot of teams recruit Hawaii for the big hitters, guys that run downhill on people," Beatty said. "Just being the physical players we are growing up, I think people know that's the kind of player you're going to get from Hawaii."

Beatty wasn't listed as a starter against the Rams, but made his presence felt with three tackles for loss.

Sipili, who has ascended to the top of the depth chart at middle linebacker, had four solo tackles as he tries to keep the momentum going from his junior year.

They are two of 102 Hawaii high school graduates currently on rosters at Football Bowl Subdivision programs on the mainland.

Beatty is one of 16 Kahuku kids playing major college football, the most of any Hawaii high school.

"Actually, it doesn't surprise me," Beatty said. "There's always great players in Hawaii and I think my senior year, that Kahuku team, I couldn't tell you how many, but we had a lot of guys on that team that went on to play."

The OIA and ILH are both represented by exactly 43 players. The MIL has 12 players and the BIIF is responsible for four.

Sipili and Beatty are two of six kids playing in the Big 12. The Pac-10 leads the way with 41 Hawaii high school graduates, followed by the Mountain West (22) and the Western Athletic Conference (20).

After Kahuku, Kamehameha is next in line with 13 players, followed by Punahou (11), Saint Louis (nine) and Baldwin and Damien (six each).

In all, 26 different high schools are represented in seven conferences. Independent teams Navy (six) and Notre Dame (three) are also well represented.

Colorado, which also has Sione Tau (Damien '07) and Kaiwi Crabb (Punahou '10) on its roster, travels to California this weekend before hosting Hawaii a week later.

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