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Season recap: Colorado

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[COLORADO BUFFALOES](#)

Record: 3-10, 2-7 Pac-12

The first year of Pac-12 play for Colorado under new coach Jon Embree was, well, bad. The Buffaloes didn't have the speed on either side of the ball to keep up, and that is going to be an absolute must-get in recruiting if things are going to change quickly. A season-ending upset win at Utah, however, provided a nice boost heading into the offseason.



Things got off to a bad start at Hawaii. After Embree made a big deal of a road losing streak that stretched back to 2007, the Buffs looked terrible in the first half and ended up losing 34-17. They looked much better in an overtime loss to California -- a conference game that counted as a nonconference game -- and they beat Colorado State the next weekend. There were hints of progress. But then they lost at Ohio State and blew a fourth-quarter lead against Washington State. That led to five blowout defeats in a row.

Things, however, didn't completely fall apart. The Buffs rallied to win two of their final three games, beating Arizona at home and then ending that 24-game losing streak outside their home state with a 17-14 upset of the Utes.

Offensive MVP: Running back [Rodney Stewart](#) rushed for 854 yards, caught 45 passes for 571 yards and piled up 1,686 all-purpose yards. He was one of only four players in the nation to have 500 rush/500 receiving yards this season.

Defensive MVP: Senior outside linebacker Josh Hartigan led the Buffaloes in sacks for the second straight year with eight. He also had 31 tackles, 24 solo and 10 for losses, with seven quarterback hurries, three third-down stops, and a pass broken up.

Turning point: After a 1-3 start that already included a heart-breaking overtime loss to Cal, the Buffs blew a 10-point, fourth-quarter lead to Washington State and lost 31-27. The dagger was a 63-yard touchdown pass to [Marquess Wilson](#) with 1:10 left. Colorado went on to drop five straight -- all by 25 points or more -- before rebounding to win two of last three.

What's next: Recruiting, recruiting, recruiting. It's hard to believe Colorado will be much improved next year, seeing that it loses many of its best players from 2011, including Stewart, Hartigan, QB [Tyler Hansen](#), WR [Toney Clemons](#) and OG Ryan Miller. The Buffs need more speed and they need players who can help immediately. There is good news: The Buffs won't be playing a 13-game, no bye week schedule in 2012.
