



CU coach Jon Embree says 75-80 percent of Wednesday's 28 signees could play in 2012.

Photo Courtesy: CUBuffs.com



Brooks: Embree Says 'Buffs Got Better' On Wednesday

Release: 02/01/2012 Courtesy: B.G. Brooks, Contributing Editor

BOULDER - Of all the things Jon Embree learned in his first year on the job as Colorado's head football coach, this might be near the top of the list: When talking about your school's "recruiting footprint," think big, then go bigger. If you normally wear a 12, go for a size 13.

In a word, be expansive.

Embree and his staff initially might have been reluctant to step into the Washington, D.C., area to recruit, but that changed Wednesday and perhaps forevermore with the signing of "The D.C. Three" - a trio of highly rated defensive prospects from Washington's H.D. Woodson High School.

Corners Kenneth Crawley and John Walker and defensive linemen De'Jon Wilson were among 28 signees Embree announced in his Class of 2012, a group he promised "will make the Buffaloes better."

Critics will chirp, "Better than what?" And after a 3-10 finish in his first season, Embree would agree the only

BUFFALO EXTRAS



Watch:

CU Recruit Highlights
02/01/2012



Watch:

Embree Press Conference
02/01/2012

- [→ Signing Day Notes & Bios](#)
- [→ Signing Day Quotes](#)
- [→ Brooks: Embree On Wright Decision](#)
- [→ Signing Day Central](#)

route available is up. But he believes the players in this class will help address glaring needs on defense, primarily in the secondary and line.

Last season, Embree quipped Wednesday, "I felt bad for the opposing teams' cheerleaders, having to do all those pushups (after scoring on the Buffs). I'm hoping we can slow them down."

CU rarely came close to that in 2011, allowing 36.5 points a game and yielding 40 or more points six times. The Buffs' points allowed was a Pac-12 worst, as were their 60 touchdowns allowed.

Maybe this class can help apply the clamps. It includes nine corners/safeties and nine defensive tackles/ends, with the nine D-linemen the most ever signed by CU in one class. Embree estimated that all of those defensive recruits - along with four incoming tight ends and three receivers - have better than average chances of playing in 2012. In fact, he said "75 or 80 percent" of this class is capable of immediate playing time.

If that estimate holds, and given how many freshmen (a Pac-12 high 15) played last season, the Buffs again will be a very young team. Embree isn't opposed to that (as if there was a choice), but noted any questions on his team's youth and productivity were better asked/answered "after the (2012) season. The thing about young players is that they grow up. It's good and bad; the good is that they don't know any better. There's no (bad) habits. At the end of it, it's still football . . .

"There's not just youth in this class, there's talent. Hopefully the youth shows up in practice and the talent shows up on Saturday."

After signing his first CU class a year ago - an intensified process because of his December hiring - Embree had said he and his staff preferred to stay within the school's traditional "footprint" to recruit. Far flung stops such as New Jersey, Louisiana, and Washington, D.C., might be targeted only if prospects merited such attention - and maybe only if they showed the initial interest in CU.

Scratch that thought. "Our footprint expanded," Embree said. "Now D.C. is an area we're going to be going into regularly. So, good luck Kanavis (McGhee, defensive assistant). You'll be in that middle seat (flying to Washington), mad at me . . ."

California and Texas - historically prime recruiting areas for the Buffs - produced 17 of Wednesday's 28 signees, CU's largest class since 1978. D.C. and Colorado produced three each, with five other states yielding one each. And there could be another late signee; Embree said one scholarship was being "kept in our pocket. You never know what happens down the line - somebody not qualifying or somebody slipping through the cracks."

Embree wasn't happy with the low instate yield (three) and shouldered the blame for that. "There were three areas that we wanted to reestablish ourselves," he said. "We got it done in two (Texas and California). The third area was Colorado and we didn't do a good enough job. We got three kids. We missed on some. A couple of them wanted to leave state and that's always going to be the case.

"The ones that weren't quite sure what they wanted to do, we didn't do a good enough job - and I say 'we,' it's me. I've got to continue to figure what it is that we need to do . . . I have to do a better job of getting them to understand what this place is capable of."

Assembling his second class went smoother than the first simply because there was more lead time to identify and evaluate. But the CU staff also went into this cycle having to fill specific needs (read: defense) based on last fall's shortcomings.

Said Embree: "Next year we can recruit - I don't want to say normally - but maybe like other schools in that you're taking a couple at each position every year instead of having to load up at a few positions to provide depth and players."

The offensive line, which recently lost promising sophomore-to-be Paulay Asiata, picked up just two recruits. That was by design, said Embree: "We feel good with where the O-line's at; we had other pressing issues. There's not great depth, but it's just after the initial 10 or 11 that you get a little thinned out. That first couple of groups I feel good about."

CU used one scholarship for a quarterback and Embree sounded sure about Shane Dillon, of El Cajon, Calif., being the right choice. The 6-5, 200-pound Dillon has the physical ability - size, footwork, strong arm - as well as the commitment the position now demands.

"To play this position now," said Embree, "you have to be a gym rat. You have to be that guy who's in here all the time. Last night about 5 o'clock Connor Wood (QB transfer from Texas) was in the staff room watching tape. I was teasing him, asking, 'You sure you know how to work it?' He said, 'Did you guys change the pass word?' ... I was just messing with him. To be effective now at that position you have to have those qualities and (Dillon) has those qualities."

With two recruiting classes signed, Embree has reference points he can use to plan for 2013 and beyond. He said he was pleased with "the direction we're going and how we're doing it from a staff standpoint. We're able to get a head start now. I was able to evaluate some 2013s instate and some other areas - and some 2014s. I feel like we're kind of catching up ... not only is recruiting year round, identifying (prospects) is huge for us when you're talking about the number of kids you're getting from out of state. We have to get that Colorado brand out in front of them.

"We're going to sit down as a staff and talk about our areas. Some guys felt like they had too much of an area to do an effective job. Other guys I think wanted a little bit more. We'll go through that. I thought we did a good job of team recruiting. Each kid back in August, we assigned three coaches to each kid, so that we could effectively recruit him. I thought that worked well for us."

CU's Class of 2012 was ranked No. 29 by Scout.com and No. 33 by Rivals.com. It was the highest ranking for a CU class since 2008, and was a breakthrough of sorts if you subscribe to ranking recruiting classes. Embree doesn't. ... then again he does.

Asked if he put much stock in having a Top 25 or 30 class, he answered, "I think all coaches when they finish in that (number) they say yes, and when they don't, they say no ... I wish we could rank the classes after four years to see who stayed, who performed. Sometimes due to academics or injuries people don't make it.

"But (rankings) give you a barometer of kind of where you are. I think it's great for your fans. It keeps excitement up, keeps people involved in your programs. Another thing, I've never heard a coach get up and say he had a bad recruiting class on signing day. You've got to take it all with a grain of salt."

And think about this: If coming off a three-win season Embree and his guys fashioned a No. 29/33 class, what might be possible when the Buffs reach the postseason? Embree promised it will get better, but added there's no choice.

"The dynamic in our conference has changed," he said. "UCLA has done a great job. Washington, what they did, taking some coaches from Cal ... I mean, there was a lot of carnage in this conference recruiting, to say the least. You have to improve; it's going to be very competitive. But I feel good about our staff ... a lot of our guys have longstanding relationships in this conference."

He called CU's location a plus, being able to recruit Texas comfortably, Louisiana and now the D.C. area. And California remains a prime destination as well. "They can't take all of them (from California), the same with Texas ... I think our location and our past history allows us little bit of an advantage over the other schools," Embree said. "But I hope that translates into kids wanting to stay home, first off."

More than the recruiting rankings, Embree was buoyed by the way his returning players assisted in this class' recruitment even though they know he signs players who can supplant them on the depth chart and in the

starting lineup.

"That's the job of recruiting; you want to bring in players who are better than what you have," he said. "That makes your team better. I think this class can do that."

CU-CSU GAME SWITCHED TO SUNDAY: The **Cinch Jeans Rocky Mountain Showdown**, the annual in-state battle between Colorado and Colorado State, will kick off the season for both teams on Sunday, September 2; the game had been scheduled the day before (September 1), but will move to accommodate an expected national television audience on either ESPN or Fox Sports. Thus, the game time won't be known until television arrangements are finalized; it once again will be played in Denver at Sports Authority Field at Mile High. This will be the 84th meeting between the two, as Colorado leads the all-time series by a 61-20-2 count. It will mark the 18th straight year the rivalry will be televised on either a national or regional basis (10 day games, eight night games) and it will be the 12th time the two will play in Denver, where CU owns a 7-4 advantage, including wins in the last four played in Colorado's capital city.

Contact: BG.Brooks@Colorado.EDU

SHOW MENU





CU coach Jon Embree went to bat for 2012 signee Yuri Wright.

Photo Courtesy: Associated Press



Brooks: Embree Explains Decision To Stick With Wright

Release: 02/01/2012 Courtesy: B.G. Brooks, Contributing Editor

BOULDER - Jon Embree didn't wait for Yuri Wright to commit to Colorado before the pair had a heart-to-heart talk. It could just as well have been father-to-son.

News of Wright's commitment to CU broke on Tuesday, Jan. 24. On Thursday, Jan. 19, the day after Wright was expelled from Don Bosco Preparatory High School in Ramsey, N.J., the Buffaloes' head coach spoke with him.

At issue for administrators at Don Bosco and reportedly at least one school recruiting Wright were Wright's series of objectionable tweets. Michigan reportedly halted its recruitment of the high-profile defensive back - and for the record, the high-profile tag applied long before the unsettling national Twitter account saga - when Wright's unflattering words went public.

When they spoke, Embree said he could tell Wright "had been crying" and termed their talk "a hard conversation to go through, because this kid, his whole world has possibly been ripped from him. He's not a bad kid. His opportunity to get an education and do something he loves doing was hanging in the balance."

When Embree recruits, as he did for CU and UCLA as an assistant coach and does now in his first head coaching job, his immediate objective is the obvious one. Not far behind, though, is forming relationships that frequently last even if a recruit signs with another school. Embree told Wright that no matter where the prospect landed,

the best he could hope for was having learned a lesson.

Recalled Embree: "I told him that whatever ends up happening, just be ready for your opportunity. It's a hard lesson to learn and tough to go through now, but you've got to understand what you did, you can't do (in the future). This doesn't necessarily define you as a person; you're 17. Hopefully you live another 60-70 years, so you've got a lot of time left to show people who you are and what you're about. You have to think about that every day when you wake up; this is another day for you to not necessarily reclaim your character, but to show people the true Yuri Wright. That's all I said to him; that was it - nothing else."

It might have been enough to factor into an apology Wright issued on Wednesday, Jan. 25 - the day after his commitment to CU went nationwide. Interviewed by ESPN.com's Greg Biggins, Wright admitted to making "a huge mistake," said he "learned a valuable lesson," and pledged "nothing like that will ever happen again. Everyone that knows me knows that's not my true character or who I really am. I'm not going to sit here and try and make excuses for what I did. I'm just going to be a man and say I was wrong and I learned from it."

Wright also said he hoped what he experienced in the very public world of social media would serve as an example to other prospects or players: "My days with social media are over, I promise."

As for his connection with Embree, Wright acknowledged his future coach for standing by him and offering a fresh start. He also claimed Embree knows his true character "and what kind of person I am . . . It was tough to get kicked out of school, but I'm going to finish up and then I can't wait to get out to Colorado and start that new chapter of my life. Hopefully, people won't judge me and will give me the same second chance coach Embree did. I'm not going to blow it again."

Two days before National Signing Day, Embree wasn't sure where Wright would finish his senior year of high school. Embree said an appeals process was underway at Don Bosco, a private Catholic secondary school, but he added that Wright has an alternative high school to attend if he is not readmitted to Don Bosco. Embree does not expect Wright's admission to CU to be jeopardized "as long as he continues his work. I expect him to be qualified."

For Embree, the Yuri Wright/Twitter episode stampeded his growing social media concerns to the forefront. At a team meeting on Monday, Embree addressed his returning players about being smart with their tweets. "I don't want to ban it; it's part of their lives," he said. "But there have to be guidelines, an understanding of what's right and wrong. Some kids we get, we have to raise them - and that's just a part of it. Maybe in their world (objectionable tweets) that's normal. But there's a different definition of normal; we have to dialogue and manage it."

When the Wright/Twitter issue made national news and the Buffs continued to recruit him, eventually getting his verbal commitment, Embree said he followed CU's chain of command as high as was necessary to vouch for Wright and clear him to be signed.

"It went up there . . . it went all the way up there (to Chancellor Phil DiStefano)," Embree said. "I was letting them know what kind of kid he was. I think in my time here I've shown I'm a pretty good judge of character with these kids. When something's not right, I think I've come down with appropriate punishment."

"There's been other talented players that I've recruited in two classes that at one point or another I felt like they weren't good fits here and weren't the kind of people our fans would be glad to be Buffaloes. So I didn't take them. Trust me, that's one of the components as we go through this recruiting process . . . trying to get the guys who will do what you want off the field."

"Are you right every time? No. You have a hundred and something kids there. But I feel like our staff does a good job of dealing with these kids and issues. If we feel like a kid has (serious) issues we're not going to bring him in here."

Before Wright arrives on campus this summer, Embree doesn't believe he needs to be forewarned about being in

the spotlight. "He knows, trust me," Embree said. "But it's not me; he knows everybody is looking at him. Trust me. He's very aware of everything."

Embree said as difficult as it might be for some to believe, Wright is "a shy kid. His teammates seem to like him. He's competitive. He's a good kid. Having been around the kid, people who have been around him for years - different coaches - they vouch for the kid. They see how he is around his parents, his situation, how he is with his sisters . . . by no stretch of the imagination do I feel like he's a bad kid.

"Did he make a mistake? Yeah. But there a lot of 17-year-old kids who make mistakes. Some aren't as public as his. It was unfortunate. But part of my job as a coach is to help these kids, raise them . . . so they can be something in life, be successful. You can't just label someone then throw them in the trash."

Contact: BG.Brooks@Colorado.EDU

SHOW MENU



National Signing Day

Jon Embree's CU Buffs 'got better' today

28 players join Colorado program on national signing day

By **Kyle Ringo** Buffzone.com
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:02/01/2012 05:06:44 PM MST

Buffzone.com

*Buffzone.com stories from
Wednesday, Feb. 1.*

[Embree's Buffs 'got better'
today](#)

[NOTES: Embree happy
about offensive line depth](#)

[Youth movement for Buffs](#)

[THORBURN: Embree is up
to the Pac-12 challenge](#)

Colorado coach Jon Embree opened his signing day press conference with a sigh of relief and a dose of optimism for fans looking to the future.

"Today we got better," Embree said. "We definitely got better."

Embree announced the names of 28 players who joined the program Wednesday on national signing day. There were no surprises. Every recruit who had previously pledged to put his signature on a national letter of intent did so and faxed it to the second floor offices in the Dal Ward Center where Embree and his coaching staff waited throughout the day beginning in the early morning hours.

By late afternoon, the class was holding strong around the top-30 in the nation in rankings done by the major recruiting services. It was ranked No. 29 by [Scout.com](#).

The CU program is coming off a 3-10 season in Embree's first year at the helm and all but two of the teams ranked ahead of it by Scout played in a bowl game last year. Embree said he feels good about what his coaching staff might be able to do on the recruiting trail in the future when the Buffs are more competitive and

CU-CSU showdown set for Sunday, Sept. 2

Men's basketball: CU to face young, talented OSU squad Thursday

Women's basketball: Jeffery's sole focus is on winning

Basketball: Regents OK extensions for Boyle, Lappe

Soccer: Sanchez lands his first recruits for CU

Men's golf: CU struggles in first round in Hawaii

coming off bowl appearances of their own.

"I expect us to continue to put together competitive classes," he said.

The Buffs landed two four-star players in cornerbacks Yuri Wright and Kenneth Crawley. Wright listed his hometown as Spring Valley, N.Y., giving CU a recruit from the Empire State for the first time since 1979.

Crawley is one of three standout players to sign with CU out of the same high school in Washington D.C. Embree repeatedly referred to Crawley, John Walker and De'Jon Wilson as "the D.C. 3."

Wright was the subject of plenty of questions from reporters during Embree's press conference, though the first didn't come until the 25th minute.

The 6-foot-2, 175-pound prospect rated the 85th best player in the nation by [Rivals.com](#) is the highest ranked recruit to sign with the program since Nick Kasa joined the Buffs out of Legacy High School in Broomfield as a five-star recruit in 2009.

Wright was recently expelled from Don Bosco Prep in Ramsey, N.J., for posting racially and sexually inappropriate messages on his Twitter account. He has since

admitted his mistake and promised never to do it again.

Embree said he had no reservations about sticking by Wright despite his well-publicized problems.

"I understand he made a mistake, but I don't think that is a reason that you bury a kid," Embree said.

Embree noted that he discussed Wright's situation with athletic director Mike Bohn and chancellor Phil DiStefano to make sure they were comfortable with his decision to continue recruiting Wright.

"I believe part of my responsibility sitting here in this chair is to mentor and teach African-American boys how to become men," Embree said. "And to help them through when they make mistakes and to be there to pick them up. Too often in our community, there is no one there to help them."

Embree signed recruits from nine different states spanning from the East Coast to Hawaii. He said he plans to continue to recruit Woodson High School in Washington D.C., because it has given the program four players in two years.

Otherwise, Embree noted that his staff was successful in re-establishing the program in Texas and California with a total of 17 recruits from those two states. The 10 California recruits are the most from that state since 1995. The seven Texas recruits are the most from that state since 2003.

Embree said he is disappointed the program didn't do better keeping more in-state players home. Three local players -- fullback Clay Norgard (Mountain Vista) and defensive linemen Tyler Henington (Mullen) and Derek McCartney (Faith Christian) -- are part of this class.

CU Buffs 2012 football signees

A look at the 28 CU Buffs football players who signed national letters of intent Wednesday.

RB Donta Abbron 5-9, 187,

"A lot of kids when they're in seventh, eighth and ninth grade, that's when they start following college football, and I understand we haven't been what we're going to be during that time frame for them, but they have to understand they can come here and be a part of us getting back to the way things used to be around here," Embree said.

Embree has one scholarship remaining. He said he could use it later this spring if he discovers an intriguing player who went overlooked in recruiting, such as wide receiver Tyler McCulloch last year. He also could keep it and possibly reward it to a walk-on in the fall.

Upland, Calif., Upland High School

DB Kenneth Crawley 6-2, 170, Washington, D.C., H.D. Woodson High School

RB Terrence Crowder 5-10, 212, Galena Park, Texas, Galena Park High School

QB Shane Dillon 6-5, 185, El Cajon, Calif., Christian High School

DB Jeffrey Hall 5-11, 180, LaPlace, La., St. Charles Catholic High School

DT Tyler Henington 6-3, 265, Denver, Mullen High School

TE Vincent Hobbs 6-3, 230, Mesquite, Texas, Horn High School

OL Jeromy Irwin 6-5, 289, Cypress, Texas, Cy-Fair High School

TE Sean Irwin 6-4, 220, Cypress, Texas, Cy-Fair High School

DE Kisima Jagne 6-5, 235, Chandler, Ariz., Chandler High School

DE Samson Kafovalu 6-3, 253, Riverside, Calif., Arlington High School

OL Gerrad Kough 6-5, 270, Pomona, Calif., Pomona High School

DE Derek McCartney 6-4, 220, Arvada, Faith Christian High School

ATH Marques Mosley 6-1, 174, Upland, Calif., Upland High School

RB Clay Norgard 6-2, 240, Highlands Ranch, Mountain Vista High School

RB Davien Payne 5-11, 213, Perris, Calif., Cirtus Hill High

School

FB Christian Powell 5-11, 250,
Upland, Calif., Upland High
School

DT Kory Rasmussen 6-3, 255,
Honolulu, Kamehameha High
School

TE Austin Ray 6-6, 235,
Columbia, Mo., Rock Bridge High
School

DT Justin Solis 6-3, 287,
Westlake Village, Calif., Westlake
High School

DE John Stuart 6-4, 230,
Westlake Village, Calif., Westlake
High School

WR Gerald Thomas 5-10, 170,
The Colony, Texas, The Colony
High School

WR Jeffrey Thomas 6-3, 180,
Duncanville, Texas, Duncanville
High School

DT Josh Tupou 6-4, 302, Buena
Park, Calif., Buena Park High
School

DB John Walker 6-0, 175,
Washington, D.C., H.D. Woodson
High School

WR Peyton Williams 6-1, 185,
Southlake, Texas, Carroll High
School

DE De'Jon Wilson 6-3, 240,
Washington, D.C., H.D. Woodson
High School

CB Yuri Wright 6-2, 180,
Ramsey, N.J., Don Bosco Prep
High School

Close Window

Send To Printer

Jon Embree happy about CU Buffs offensive line depth

By **Kyle Ringo** Buffzone.com
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:02/01/2012 11:57:58 PM MST

Buffzone.com

*Buffzone.com stories from
Wednesday, Feb. 1.*

[Embree's Buffs 'got better' today](#)

NOTES: Embree happy about offensive line depth

[Youth movement for Buffs](#)

[THORBURN: Embree is up to the Pac-12 challenge](#)

[CU-CSU showdown set for Sunday, Sept. 2](#)

[Men's basketball: CU to face young, talented OSU squad Thursday](#)

[Women's basketball: Jeffery's sole focus is on winning](#)

[Basketball: Regents OK extensions for Boyle, Lappe](#)

[Soccer: Sanchez lands his first recruits for CU](#)

[Men's golf: CU struggles in first round in Hawaii](#)

While some Colorado football fans might fret over depth on the offensive line heading into 2012, coach Jon Embree says he feels pretty good about that area of the roster top to bottom.

Embree added just two offensive linemen in the 2012 recruiting class announced Wednesday and chances are Gerrad Kough and Jeromy Irwin won't be ready to play on Saturdays. Embree is betting he won't need them.

Colorado's second-year coach said he is confident he has enough talent and depth in his first 10 or 11 linemen to get through the season even if the group encounters a rash of injuries. Embree said several players received experienced in 2011 because of injuries to teammates and that gives him a larger group of players who are capable of playing this year.

The group will be anchored by returning starters David Bakhtiari, Gus Handler and Ryan Dannewitz, but others such as Daniel Munyer, Kaiwi Crabb and Alex Lewis played at times last fall. Junior Jack Harris was a starter briefly at the beginning of last season, but missed most of the year after breaking his leg.

"There is plenty of flexibility," Embree said. "It's after your initial maybe 10 or 11 that you get a little thinned out, but that first group, that first couple groups I feel good about."

Embree likes postseason visits

CU didn't host a lot of recruits on official visits during the season in Embree's first year and that probably won't change dramatically in the future. Embree prefers to host large recruiting weekends in early December and January. He said he will prefer that plan even more when he has bowl game practices for recruits to watch.

Embree said he has reservations about hosting too many in-season visitors and allows his assistants to schedule those visits if they feel they have to.

"It's hard because you don't get to spend time with them," Embree said. "That is something we will continue to revisit. Obviously if you get in a bowl game, it's a lot easier cause you have that week and your practicing."

CU Buffs 2012 football signees

A look at the 28 CU Buffs football players who signed national letters of intent Wednesday.

RB Donta Abron 5-9, 187, Upland, Calif., Upland High School

Three-coach approach

Embree said back in August there were 53 names of recruits on the master board CU coaches worked from this year. He said his program landed 20 of those

players Wednesday.

DB Kenneth Crawley 6-2, 170, Washington, D.C., H.D. Woodson High School

RB Terrence Crowder 5-10, 212, Galena Park, Texas, Galena Park High School

QB Shane Dillon 6-5, 185, El Cajon, Calif., Christian High School

DB Jeffrey Hall 5-11, 180, LaPlace, La., St. Charles Catholic High School

DT Tyler Henington 6-3, 265, Denver, Mullen High School

TE Vincent Hobbs 6-3, 230, Mesquite, Texas, Horn High School

OL Jeromy Irwin 6-5, 289, Cypress, Texas, Cy-Fair High School

TE Sean Irwin 6-4, 220, Cypress, Texas, Cy-Fair High School

DE Kisima Jagne 6-5, 235, Chandler, Ariz., Chandler High School

DE Samson Kafovalu 6-3, 253, Riverside, Calif., Arlington High School

OL Gerrad Kough 6-5, 270, Pomona, Calif., Pomona High School

DE Derek McCartney 6-4, 220, Arvada, Faith Christian High School

ATH Marques Mosley 6-1, 174, Upland, Calif., Upland High School

RB Clay Norgard 6-2, 240, Highlands Ranch, Mountain Vista High School

RB Davien Payne 5-11, 213, Perris, Calif., Cirtus Hill High School

FB Christian Powell 5-11, 250,

He credited his assistants and the three-coach approach they used. Three coaches were assigned to each recruit to make sure all of the prospects they were pursuing heard from multiple voices in the program.

Embree said he and his assistants will sit down in the next few weeks and re-evaluate some of the recruiting territories assigned to each coach.

"We're going to sit down as a staff and talk about our areas," he said. "Some guys felt like they had too much of an area to do an effective job. Other guys I think wanted a little bit more."

Notable

The nine defensive line recruits is a record for that group in one class at CU. This is also the first time in periods in which the school has accurate records that the program did not sign at least one linebacker. Embree said linebacker was not a priority because of the other needs up and down the roster. He said linebacker will be a focal point in the next class.

Upland, Calif., Upland High School

DT Kory Rasmussen 6-3, 255,
Honolulu, Kamehameha High School

TE Austin Ray 6-6, 235,
Columbia, Mo., Rock Bridge High School

DT Justin Solis 6-3, 287,
Westlake Village, Calif., Westlake High School

DE John Stuart 6-4, 230,
Westlake Village, Calif., Westlake High School

WR Gerald Thomas 5-10, 170,
The Colony, Texas, The Colony High School

WR Jeffrey Thomas 6-3, 180,
Duncanville, Texas, Duncanville High School

DT Josh Tupou 6-4, 302, Buena Park, Calif., Buena Park High School

DB John Walker 6-0, 175,
Washington, D.C., H.D. Woodson High School

WR Peyton Williams 6-1, 185,
Southlake, Texas, Carroll High School

DE De'Jon Wilson 6-3, 240,
Washington, D.C., H.D. Woodson High School

CB Yuri Wright 6-2, 180,
Ramsey, N.J., Don Bosco Prep High School

Close Window

Send To Printer

CU Buffs could be looking at youth movement

Embree estimates that 75 percent of class could play this season

By **Kyle Ringo** Buffzone.com
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted: 02/01/2012 08:42:18 PM MST

Buffzone.com

*Buffzone.com stories from
Wednesday, Feb. 1.*

[Embree's Buffs 'got better'
today](#)

NOTES: Embree happy
about offensive line depth

[Youth movement for Buffs](#)

[THORBURN: Embree is up
to the Pac-12 challenge](#)

[CU-CSU showdown set for
Sunday, Sept. 2](#)

[Men's basketball: CU to
face young, talented OSU
squad Thursday](#)

[Women's basketball:
Jeffery's sole focus is on
winning](#)

[Basketball: Regents OK
extensions for Boyle, Lappe](#)

[Soccer: Sanchez lands his
first recruits for CU](#)

[Men's golf: CU struggles in
first round in Hawaii](#)

Perhaps the most surprising and noteworthy statement Jon Embree made Wednesday among the praises for his new recruits and one-liners he delivered about past experiences was that he believes it's possible 75 percent of the recruiting class he announced could play next fall.

Embree signed 28 recruits to national letters of intent in this cycle. That translates to 21 true freshmen possibly on the field in Embree's second season. Obviously, he was just offering an estimate, but it signaled there will be some growing pains to come.

Embree signed nine defensive linemen, three wide receivers and five defensive backs. He said with the exception of defensive end Derek McCartney, who will delay his enrollment until January 2013, all of those players will be in the mix for playing time.

One or two of the tight ends, several running backs and quarterback Shane Dillon are in the same position.

CU Buffs 2012 football signees

A look at the 28 CU Buffs football players who signed national letters of intent Wednesday.

RB Donta Abron 5-9, 187, Upland, Calif., Upland High School

DB Kenneth Crawley 6-2, 170, Washington, D.C., H.D. Woodson High School

RB Terrence Crowder 5-10, 212, Galena Park, Texas, Galena Park High School

QB Shane Dillon 6-5, 185, El Cajon, Calif., Christian High School

DB Jeffrey Hall 5-11, 180, LaPlace, La., St. Charles Catholic

"I'm sure there will be some mistakes that will be made because of their youth, but also, there is not just youth in this class, there is talent," Embree said. "So hopefully the youth shows up in practice and the talent shows up on Saturday."

Embree used 15 true freshmen last fall and some of them produced stellar seasons. Cornerback Greg Henderson tops that list, having led the defense with 823 snaps under his belt.

The bulk of next year's roster will be in the freshmen and sophomore classes. There are just 10 seniors and 20 juniors on the team heading into spring practices next month. CU also will have an inexperienced quarterback, regardless of who wins the job.

As is the case with a lot of the issues he encounters in coaching, Embree refers back to his experience as a player to guide him. He recalls playing as a true freshman in Boulder under former coach Bill McCartney. He said outside of the first few plays in his first game, it wasn't a big issue for him.

At the same time, Embree admits he

High School

DT Tyler Henington 6-3, 265,
Denver, Mullen High School

TE Vincent Hobbs 6-3, 230,
Mesquite, Texas, Horn High
School

OL Jeromy Irwin 6-5, 289,
Cypress, Texas, Cy-Fair High
School

TE Sean Irwin 6-4, 220, Cypress,
Texas, Cy-Fair High School

DE Kisima Jagne 6-5, 235,
Chandler, Ariz., Chandler High
School

DE Samson Kafovalu 6-3, 253,
Riverside, Calif., Arlington High
School

OL Gerrad Kough 6-5, 270,
Pomona, Calif., Pomona High
School

DE Derek McCartney 6-4, 220,
Arvada, Faith Christian High
School

ATH Marques Mosley 6-1, 174,
Upland, Calif., Upland High
School

RB Clay Norgard 6-2, 240,
Highlands Ranch, Mountain Vista
High School

RB Davien Payne 5-11, 213,
Perris, Calif., Cirtus Hill High
School

FB Christian Powell 5-11, 250,
Upland, Calif., Upland High
School

DT Kory Rasmussen 6-3, 255,
Honolulu, Kamehameha High
School

TE Austin Ray 6-6, 235,
Columbia, Mo., Rock Bridge High
School

DT Justin Solis 6-3, 287,
Westlake Village, Calif., Westlake
High School

already has spent time thinking about how he can help his freshmen transition quickly and smoothly to the college game and help contribute on game days.

"You really do have to keep it simple so they can play and so they're not thinking," Embree said. "The other thing is just

DE John Stuart 6-4, 230,
Westlake Village, Calif., Westlake
High School

WR Gerald Thomas 5-10, 170,
The Colony, Texas, The Colony
High School

WR Jeffrey Thomas 6-3, 180,
Duncanville, Texas, Duncanville
High School

DT Josh Tupou 6-4, 302, Buena
Park, Calif., Buena Park High
School

DB John Walker 6-0, 175,
Washington, D.C., H.D. Woodson
High School

WR Peyton Williams 6-1, 185,
Southlake, Texas, Carroll High
School

DE De'Jon Wilson 6-3, 240,
Washington, D.C., H.D. Woodson
High School

CB Yuri Wright 6-2, 180,
Ramsey, N.J., Don Bosco Prep
High School

letting them know, 'You're going to make a mistake. Don't worry about it. Keep going.'

"Sometimes as a young player you make a couple mistakes and you get down on yourself. We're going to have to do a good job of coaching them through some of the low moments. If we can only play two coverages, we'll play two coverages, but let them play. That's what you have to do."

Embree said the inexperience factor worries him particularly in the early part of the season and not as much as players begin to get a feel for the college game and what is required of them.

Close Window

Send To Printer

THORBURN: Jon Embree is up to the Pac-12 challenge

By **Ryan Thorburn** Buffzone.com
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:02/01/2012 06:18:15 PM MST

Buffzone.com

*Buffzone.com stories from
Wednesday, Feb. 1.*

[Embree's Buffs 'got better'
today](#)

NOTES: Embree happy
about offensive line depth

[Youth movement for Buffs](#)

[THORBURN: Embree is up
to the Pac-12 challenge](#)

[CU-CSU showdown set for
Sunday, Sept. 2](#)

[Men's basketball: CU to](#)

It can't get worse than it was.

And yet the job is only going to get harder.

That's basically where the Colorado football program finds itself right now.

Jon Embree suffered through a 3-10 first season as head coach while dealing with a myriad of injuries and other issues.

The new coaching staff leaned on a huge senior class that didn't learn how to win until November. Most of Embree's baby-faced freshmen had grown up quickly by the end of the fall.

"I felt bad for the opposing teams' cheerleaders in some of those games," Embree quipped on Wednesday while announcing the signing of a consequential 2012 recruiting class. "All the push-ups started to add up."

Losing is no longer acceptable inside the Dal Ward Center. The Buffaloes are stampeding in the right direction with a locker room that will be filled with determined young faces.

Despite adding 28 impressive new players to the program from Ewa Beach, Hawaii, to Spring Valley, N.Y., Embree still has a lot of work to do to run down his

face young, talented OSU
squad Thursday

Women's basketball:
Jeffery's sole focus is on
winning

Basketball: Regents OK
extensions for Boyle, Lappe

Soccer: Sanchez lands his
first recruits for CU

Men's golf: CU struggles in
first round in Hawaii

Pac-12 peers.

Chip Kelly has fancier Nike's and a huge head start.

"The bulk of our players that are going to make us successful next year are on campus right now," Kelly bragged during ESPN's saturation coverage of national signing day.

Perhaps Embree -- who plans to play 75 percent of his incoming freshmen and knows "there will be some mistakes because of their youth" -- should have used some of the budget to fly to Tampa to help Malcolm Glazer recruit Kelly to coach the Buccaneers.

Oregon beat CU 45-2 at Folsom Field along the path to the inaugural Pac-12 title. The Ducks also won the Rose Bowl.

Kelly still turned down a chance to be an NFL head coach because he feels there is "unfinished business" in Eugene.

Matt Barkley was the first to coin the phrase when the star quarterback announced his decision to return to USC. The Trojans' two-year bowl ban is over, which means Barkley's decision was influenced by BCS championship dreams.

Even though USC was only allowed to sign 15 recruits on Wednesday due to NCAA-imposed scholarship reductions, Lane Kiffin's class is ranked No. 8 by [Rivals.com](#).

Stanford loses Andrew Luck but just added the No. 5 class, which matches USC's in terms of five-star (three) and four-star (10) studs.

UCLA, which replaced Rick Neuheisel with former NFL head coach Jim Mora, had the No. 12 class.

The gurus rated Oregon (15), Washington (22), Utah (27), Cal (29), Arizona State (31), CU (34) and Oregon State (38) all in the top 40 nationally.

Arizona (Rich Rodriguez) and Washington State (Mike Leach) made offseason splashes by investing in big-name coaches that have re-energized those fan bases.

No wonder Embree has already started studying tape of 2013 and some 2014 prospects.

"I feel like we're kind of catching up," Embree said. "As we continue to move forward and get everyone in their areas, we can get ahead."

UCLA hired assistant coaches away from Washington and Arizona State, which helped flip players from those conference rivals to become Bruins.

Washington used the same tactic, luring one of Cal's best recruiters to join the staff in Seattle. The Bears watched helplessly as a couple of five-star guys put on the Huskies gear.

Even mighty USC had some late defections.

"There was a lot of carnage in this conference recruiting, to say the least," said Embree, who was able to keep his top-notch staff intact.

Competing in the Pac-12 is not for the faint of heart.

Embree has the mettle to see this through. The second-year head coach took another important step on Wednesday.

CU Buffs 2012 football signees

A look at the 28 CU Buffs football players who signed national letters of intent Wednesday.

RB Donta Abron 5-9, 187,
Upland, Calif., Upland High
School

DB Kenneth Crawley 6-2, 170,
Washington, D.C., H.D. Woodson
High School

RB Terrence Crowder 5-10,
212, Galena Park, Texas, Galena
Park High School

QB Shane Dillon 6-5, 185, El
Cajon, Calif., Christian High
School

DB Jeffrey Hall 5-11, 180,
LaPlace, La., St. Charles Catholic
High School

DT Tyler Henington 6-3, 265,
Denver, Mullen High School

TE Vincent Hobbs 6-3, 230,
Mesquite, Texas, Horn High
School

OL Jeromy Irwin 6-5, 289,
Cypress, Texas, Cy-Fair High
School

TE Sean Irwin 6-4, 220, Cypress,
Texas, Cy-Fair High School

DE Kisima Jagne 6-5, 235,
Chandler, Ariz., Chandler High
School

DE Samson Kafovalu 6-3, 253,
Riverside, Calif., Arlington High
School

OL Gerrad Kough 6-5, 270,
Pomona, Calif., Pomona High
School

DE Derek McCartney 6-4, 220,
Arvada, Faith Christian High

School

ATH Marques Mosley 6-1, 174,
Upland, Calif., Upland High
School

RB Clay Norgard 6-2, 240,
Highlands Ranch, Mountain Vista
High School

RB Davien Payne 5-11, 213,
Perris, Calif., Cirtus Hill High
School

FB Christian Powell 5-11, 250,
Upland, Calif., Upland High
School

DT Kory Rasmussen 6-3, 255,
Honolulu, Kamehameha High
School

TE Austin Ray 6-6, 235,
Columbia, Mo., Rock Bridge High
School

DT Justin Solis 6-3, 287,
Westlake Village, Calif., Westlake
High School

DE John Stuart 6-4, 230,
Westlake Village, Calif., Westlake
High School

WR Gerald Thomas 5-10, 170,
The Colony, Texas, The Colony
High School

WR Jeffrey Thomas 6-3, 180,
Duncanville, Texas, Duncanville
High School

DT Josh Tupou 6-4, 302, Buena
Park, Calif., Buena Park High
School

DB John Walker 6-0, 175,
Washington, D.C., H.D. Woodson
High School

WR Peyton Williams 6-1, 185,
Southlake, Texas, Carroll High
School

DE De'Jon Wilson 6-3, 240,
Washington, D.C., H.D. Woodson
High School

CB Yuri Wright 6-2, 180,

Ramsey, N.J., Don Bosco Prep
High School

Close Window

Send To Printer



The City of Westminster is now accepting applications for our season
NOW OPEN: Parks, Golf Courses, & Public Works
OPENING SOON: Outdoor Pools & Recreation Programs
 Check for position updates
 Po

ABOUT | CONTACT US | CLASSIFIEDS | ADVERTISING | APARTMENTS | COUPONS | Buffs on Video |

CU independent.com

NEWS | ENTERTAINMENT | LIFESTYLE | SPORTS | FEATURES | OPINION | COLUMNS | COUPONS

Football and soccer officially sign recruiting classes

Written by Mark McNeillie in Football, Soccer, Sports on Feb 2, 2012 6:21 / comments

The Buffalo family just got a whole lot bigger.

CU head football coach Jon Embree signed 28 high school recruits on Wednesday.

Feb. 1 was the first day recruits were allowed to sign the national letters of intent to play football at the school of their choice, and the Buffs signed their largest class since 1978.

"Today, we got better," Embree said in a press conference Wednesday afternoon. "The Buffaloes got a lot better."

The 2012 class, which has been ranked No. 29 in the country by Scout.com, includes 11 players from California, seven from Texas, three from Washington, D.C., and others from around the country.

One of the notable facts about this year's class is that there are only three recruits from the state of Colorado, something Embree said he wasn't happy about.

Like One person likes this. Be the first of your friends.
 Tweet 1 0



Freshman Keenan Canty returns a punt during Saturday's game against Oregon at Folsom Field. (CU Independent/James Bradbury)

Mal

In s
to s
info
Cor
the
righ



NE

“There was three areas that we wanted re-establish ourselves, and we got it done in two,” Embree said. “The third area was Colorado. We didn’t do a good enough job, and by we, I mean me.”

The Buffs’ biggest recruiting success this year is the controversial acquisition of defensive back Yuri Wright. Wright, who hails from Spring Valley, N.Y., is ranked as the 18th best player in the country, according to the Sporting News.

But Wright also comes to Boulder with some baggage. He was expelled from Don Bosco Prep in Ramsey, N.J., because he posted tweets that contained racial slurs and sexually graphic material. Some other schools dropped his scholarship offers, but Embree said he never thought twice about extending an offer to Wright.

“I didn’t have any reservations,” said Embree. “I understand he made a mistake, but I don’t think that’s a reason you bury a kid. Yuri Wright had a ton a friends before this incident, and what I told Yuri is ‘now you know who really is for you.’”

Another top recruit joining the Buffs is defensive back Kenneth Crawley, who is coming to Boulder from H.D. Woodson High School in Washington, D.C. Crawley is considered the No. 2 prospect from the D.C. area according to SuperPrep and other news services.

Embree said he is looking forward to the personality Crawley will bring to the team.

“He’ll make [secondary coach Greg Brown]’s meeting room a little bit more lively,” said Embree.

Joining Crawley in the fall will be two of his high school teammates, John Walker and De’Jon Wilson. Fans are affectionately calling the group the “D.C. Three.”

Embree also received praise for recruiting running back Donta Abron. Embree said the Upton, Calif., prospect reminds him of another running back he recruited during his time at UCLA.

“It was scary when we watched his tape,” said Embree. “Eric [Bieniemy] and I were laughing because his tape looked a lot like Maurice Jones-Drew’s did.”

A full list of football recruits can be found [here](#).

Football wasn’t the only team that added players on Wednesday.

The CU women’s soccer team and new head coach Danny Sanchez had five players sign letters of intent.

Jenna Glad, Madison Krauser, Carly Manso, Olivia Pappalardo and Heather Ward will join the Buffs in August, as Sanchez looks to get his career at CU off the ground.

Rec

This
have
Larg
awa
incu
Boa



RECI

Footb
Reger
Photo
Super
Buffs :

RECI

Buff o
Bayle
Dexial
alumn
Chuck
Libran
Benor
charge

college football

CU Buffs football recruiting: "D" is back in Colorado

Posted: 02/02/2012 01:00:00 AM MST

Updated: 02/02/2012 06:12:01 AM MST By Tom

Kensler

The Denver Post

Posted: 02/02/2012 01:00:00 AM MST

Updated: 02/02/2012 06:12:01 AM MST

BOULDER — Beginning Year 2 of his rebuilding plan, Colorado football coach Jon Embree acknowledged Wednesday during the school's signing day announcement that he had to fill critical needs rather than round up as much talent as possible regardless of position, as he might like to.

Foremost among CU's needs: finding defensive players who can put pressure on a quarterback and cover fleet wide receivers.

"I felt bad for some of the opposing teams' cheerleaders in those games, all them push-ups (in celebration of touchdowns)," Embree said of his team yielding 36.5 points per game in 2011.

During its rough 3-10 debut in the pass-happy Pac-12, Colorado ranked last among conference teams in scoring defense. CU also yielded a league-high 60 touchdowns for all games, including 34 through the air.

Embree said he hopes his recruiting class can help "slow that down a little bit." His 28-player class features nine defensive linemen

(the most ever signed in a CU class) and five defensive backs. Four of the deep defenders are cornerbacks, including the only two four-star prospects in the class: Yuri Wright (6-foot-2 and 175 pounds), formerly of New Jersey power Don Bosco Prep, and Kenneth Crawley (6-1, 170), one of three signees from H.D. Woodson High School in Washington, D. C.

Wright, ranked as high as No. 40 nationally for all positions (ESPN.com), is the top blue-chipper of the bunch, but, of late, he has become known for something else. Wright was expelled from Don Bosco last month for a series of sexually explicit and racially insensitive tweets. Michigan revoked its scholarship offer to Wright, but Colorado was among those that continued to recruit him.

Embree said his staff had been recruiting Wright for more than a year and he had no second thoughts about signing him. Embree said he had discussions with CU chancellor Phil DiStefano and athletic director Mike Bohn and was given the go-ahead to continue recruiting Wright.

DONATE YOUR CAR!



100% Tax Deductible
Free Pick-Up Anywhere
We're Available 7 Days a Week

Donating is Fast & Easy!

Call Today 877-821-5493

The Breast Cancer Research Foundation is a classified 501 (c)(3) charity.

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

"I didn't have any reservations," Embree said. "We had Yuri on our campus a couple of times. He's a good kid. I had an opportunity to get to know him with phone conversations. ... I understand he made a mistake, but I don't think that's a reason you bury a kid. I told the chancellor that I believe one of the responsibilities I have sitting in this chair is to mentor and teach African-American young boys how to be men. When they make mistakes, somebody has to be there to pick them up. Too often in our community, there's no one there to help them."

Embree said he disagrees with the contention that Colorado wouldn't have stayed with Wright if he weren't a top prospect.

"There were some highly rated players that I didn't take," Embree said, "because I didn't think they would do the work academically or some other things. ... Yeah, if I don't win, I'm not sitting here. But at the same time, there are 105 kids in that locker room, and I have to help them become men. He touched a hot stove. I'd be surprised if he touched it again."

The one regret Embree said he has is not landing more in-state players. There are only three in this class: defensive linemen Tyler Henington (Mullen) and Derek McCartney (Faith Christian) and fullback Clay Norgard (Mountain Vista). McCartney is the grandson of CU coaching legend Bill McCartney.

"We have to do a better job (in-state)," Embree said. "I have to do a better job of getting them to understand what this place is about and what we're going to be."

Scout.com ranks CU's class No. 29 nationally. Rivals.com has it rated 34th. In any case, it's considered CU's best influx of talent in four years.

"It had to be tough for Embree and his staff to go into a (recruit's) living room and overcome Colorado's 3-10 record," said Adam Gorney, Rivals.com's West Coast evaluator. "There are some talented kids on the list. Now for CU to get the next level, it must show it can win."

Colorado placed second on two four-star tight ends, Taylor McNamara, who picked Oklahoma, and Jalen Cope-Fitzpatrick, who chose Southern California.

"The fact that we went wire to wire with those guys ... the last piece of the puzzle is winning," Embree said.

Tom Kensler: 303-954-1280 or tkensler@denverpost.com



Send flowers
for any occasion
Bouquets
from **\$19.99**^{+s/h}

ProFlowers
Offer ONLY available at:
proflowers.com/happy
or call 1.877.804.1133

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

college football

CU football nabs touted QB Shane Dillon, bruising backs

Posted: 02/01/2012 07:16:55 PM MST
Updated: 02/01/2012 08:09:33 PM MST **By Tom
Kensler**
The Denver Post

Posted: 02/01/2012 07:16:55 PM MST
Updated: 02/01/2012 08:09:33 PM MST



University of Colorado football coach Jon Embree talks about his 2012 recruiting class Wednesday in Boulder. (Cliff Grassmick, The Daily Camera)

BOULDER — Colorado beat writer Tom Kensler breaks down the Buffaloes' 2012 recruiting class by position.

QUARTERBACK

Shane Dillon
6-feet-6, 195 pounds, El Cajon (Calif.) HS

CU got an oral commitment from Dillon in May. Dillon isn't your average 3-star recruit. He was offered early by Ohio State and

Florida State and competed in the prestigious national "Elite 11" quarterback camp, where he outperformed higher-rated prospects. CU coaches can also consider Texas transfer Connor Wood (6-3, 215) as part of this class. Wood, who will be a sophomore this fall, sat out the 2011 season under NCAA transfer rules but impressed on the CU scout team with his throwing and leadership skills.

RUNNING BACKS

Donta Abbron
5-9, 190, Upland (Calif) HS

Terrence Crowder
5-10, 210, Galena Park (TX) HS

Clay Norgard (fullback)
6-1, 240, Highlands Ranch (Colo.) Mountain Vista HS

Davien Payne
5-11, 225, Perris (Calif.) Citrus Hill HS

Christian Powell (fullback)
6-0, 250, Upland (Calif.) HS

Send flowers
for any occasion

Bouquets
from **\$19.99**^{+s/h}

ProFlowers
Offer ONLY available at:
proflowers.com/happy
or call 1.877.804.1133

Print Powered By FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

Colorado coach Jon Embree joked to offensive coordinator and Buff legend Eric Bieniemy that the team needed to recruit some running backs that the 5-foot-8 Bieniemy had to literally look up to. Crowder and Payne give CU two bruising runners, and Norgard, the son of 1980s Buffs center Eric Norgard, and Powell, who flipped on Tuesday from UCLA, are physical fullbacks that every pro-set offense needs. Crowder rushed for 1,338 yards and 15 yards as a junior but suffered a season-ending knee injury (torn ACL) on his third carry last fall. Embree believes he will be ready for August camp. Payne gained 1,500 yards on just 171 carries as a senior. Abron, ranked No. 34 nationally among running backs by ESPN, totalled 1,754 yards on

Post Poll - Wright move?



Did CU coach Jon Embree make the right decision accepting a [controversial football commitment](#) from prep star Yuri Wright?

- ☐ **Yes, Embree did right:** Kids deserve second chances. And the Buffs coach can teach him well.
- ☐ **No, bad decision:** CU doesn't need this kind of bad publicity. It's more for critics to feed on.



the ground last fall.

WIDE RECEIVERS

Gerald Thomas

5-11, 175, *The Colony (Texas) HS*

Jeffrey Thomas

6-3, 190, *Duncanville (Texas) HS*

Peyton Williams

6-1, 190, *Southlake (Texas) Carroll HS*

Embree didn't land a blue-chip receiver but this trio of 3-star Texans adds speed and athleticism to the roster. After catching 92 passes for 1,196 yards for one of the top programs in Texas, Williams blew out a knee during the high school playoffs. Embree expects him to be ready for CU preseason camp. Jeffrey Thomas has "good jumping ability and catches the 50/50 balls," Embree said. Gerald Thomas is "electric with the ball," Embree said, and will be used on return teams.

TIGHT ENDS

Vincent Hobbs

6-3, 240, *Mesquite (Texas) Horn HS*

FREE

Home Security System!



Protect Your Home

 AUTHORIZED DEALER

\$850 Value!

Call Today, Protect Tomorrow!

1-888-472-8414

* With \$99 Customer Installation charge and purchase of alarm monitoring services.

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

Sean Irwin

6-4, 230, Cypress (Texas) Cy-Fair HS

Austin Ray

6-6, 235, Columbia (Mo.) Rock Bridge HS

Embree, a former tight end, seemed to make it his mission to land several quality tight ends. Embree lost out to Oklahoma for four-star tight end Taylor McNamara, who is a close friend of CU quarterback signee Shane Dillon. But Embree likes the fact that the newcomers are good high school basketball players, which shows their athleticism, and he expects each to compete for immediate playing time.

OFFENSIVE

[Blog: CU Buffs](#)



The Denver Post's sports reporters contribute analysis, notes and minutiae on this blog dedicated to CU athletics.

LINEMEN

Jeromy Irwin

6-5, 290, Cypress (Texas) Cy-Fair HS

Gerrad Kough

6-5, 270, Pomona (Calif.) HS

It may seem surprising to see only two

offensive linemen listed in this recruiting class considering that Colorado said good-bye after the season to senior starters Ryan Miller and Ethan Adkins, and then had promising sophomore-to-be Pauley Asiata leave the team in January. But Alex Kelley (6-3, 305) of Vista High in Oceanside, Calif., has joined the roster after delaying his enrollment as a "grayshirt" in order to heal a high school injury. Kelley's father, Karry Kelley, played offensive tackle for the Buffs in the 1970s. "We feel good about where the O-line is, though not if you go three-deep," Embree said. "We had other issues (recruiting priorities) we needed to address." Embree said Irwin, twin brother of tight end signee Sean Irwin, is physically ready to compete for playing time in the fall. Kough, he said, plays with a "nasty" attitude.

DEFENSIVE LINEMEN

Tyler Henington

6-3, 275, Mullen HS

Kisima Jagne

6-5, 235, Chandler (Ariz.) HS

SAVE
up to **64%**

Plus, get
3 FREE Gifts

Special Code: **45069ZWN**

To order: www.OmahaSteaks.com/print71
or call 1-877-605-0496

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

Samson Kafovalu

6-3, 250, *Riverside (Calif.) Arlington HS*

Derek McCartney

6-4, 215, *Faith Christian HS*

Kory Rasmussen

6-3, 260, *Honolulu (Hawaii) Kamehameha School*

Justin Solis

6-3, 300, *Westlake Village (Calif.) Westlake HS*

John Stuart, DE, 6-4, 250

Westlake Village (Calif.) Westlake HS

Josh Tupou

6-4, 305, *Buena Park (Calif.) HS*

De'Jon Wilson

6-3, 250, *Washington (D.C.) H.D. Woodson HS*

This lengthy list reflects a critical need — CU lost three starters among its 2011 front four. Solis (other offers included Arizona, Georgia Tech, UCLA, Utah and Washington) and Jagne (Arizona, Arizona State, Oklahoma State, Washington) are among the most highly regarded. But Embree likes the upside of the entire group. That includes McCartney, grandson of legendary Buffs coach Bill McCartney. "Derek has an unbelievable frame," Embree said. "We anxious to see how he continues to grow."

LINEBACKER

None.

Colorado signed three linebackers last year (Brady Daigh, Woodson Greer, K.T. Tu'umalo)

so Embree did not consider it a priority.

DEFENSIVE BACKS

Kenneth Crawley

6-1, 170, *Washington (D.C.) H.D. Woodson HS*

Jeffrey Hall

5-11, 175, *LaPlace (La.) St. Charles Catholic HS*

Marques Mosley

6-1, 175, *Upland (Calif.) HS*

John Walker

5-10, 170, *Washington (D.C.) H.D. Woodson HS*

Yuri Wright

6-2, 175, *Ramsey (N.J.) Don Bosco Prep*

In its 2011 debut into the pass-happy Pac-12, Colorado yielded a league worst 34 touchdown passes. Cornerback might have been considered the most important need during this recruiting cycle, and CU came through by nabbing the only two 4-star prospects in the class in Crawley and Wright.

FREE

Home Security System!



ADT AUTHORIZED DEALER

Protect Your Home

\$850 Value!

Call Today, Protect Tomorrow!

1-888-472-8414

* With \$99 Customer Installation charge and purchase of alarm monitoring services.

Print Powered By  **FormatDynamics™**

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

Hall intercepted nine passes for a state championship team in talent-rich Louisiana during his only season at cornerback. Mosley likely will be tried at safety, but Walker is another cornerback. "Those were the top four corners on our (recruiting board)," Embree said of Crawley, Hall, Walker and Wright.

KICKERS/PUNTERS

None.

Last year's starters were freshmen.

*Tom Kensler: 303-954-1280 or
tkensler@denverpost.com*

DONATE YOUR CAR!



The Breast Cancer Research Foundation

100% Tax Deductible
Free Pick-Up Anywhere
We're Available 7 Days a Week

Donating is Fast & Easy!

Call Today **877-821-5493**

The Breast Cancer Research Foundation is a classified 501 (c)(3) charity.

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

FEBRUARY 1, 2012, 3:50 PM

Jon Embree talks about Yuri Wright's commitment to Colorado: "He touched a hot stove"

By **NICK GROKE** |  7 Comments



Star Ledger

Yuri Wright

Colorado football coach Jon Embree talked Wednesday about getting an official signing day commitment from Yuri Wright, a four-star cornerback from Don Bosco Prep in New Jersey who was [expelled from school recently for a slew of sexually explicit and racially offensive twitter messages](#) ^[1].

And [Woody Paige on Wednesday discussed what Wright's signing means to the CU program](#). ^[2]

And Embree didn't back away from it.

"I didn't have any reservations," Embree said. "Being the father of a couple of boys in a similar age range, I understand he made a mistake. But that's not a reason to bury a kid."

Embree said he discussed Wright's situation with CU chancellor Phil DiStefano and athletic director Mike Bohn.

"I told him that part of my job as a coach is to be a mentor and to teach African-American boys how to be men. And when they make a mistake, it's my job to try to help pick them up. Because too often, they don't have anybody to show them the way."

Embree said he talked to Wright soon after he was expelled from school.

"He was crying. I told him, he had a lot of friends before the incident, and then none after. I told him that's how it works."

Embree said he tries to be available to help the kids he recruits — including those who decide not to enroll at CU.

"I'm glad I wasn't 17 years old in the '80s, we didn't have cellphones and whatever. But that train's left the station. That's part of growing up, is learning those lessons. At the same time, it's not a reason to not allow a kid an opportunity to improve himself.

"It has nothing to do with football. We had some highly-rated kids we didn't take, because character-wise it's something I didn't want in this program. Last year too."

Embree said his decision to recruit Wright, after other schools, including Michigan, removed their offers, had little to do with only wanting to win.

"Yeah, I have to win games or I'm not sitting here. But at the same time, there are 105 kids in that locker room and I have to help them become men. It never once crossed my mind not to help this kid, whether he came here or went somewhere else."

Ultimately, Embree hopes Wright's controversy becomes a teaching moment for his players.

"I told them, don't tweet anything about girls, don't use the 'N word' and don't say anything about your teammates.

"That was the most disappointing thing about what he did, use the 'N word.' Unfortunately, it's a generational thing — they say it likes it's saying 'homeboy.' But I don't think they truly understand the connotations of that word, they don't understand the struggles of African-Americans who had to overcome an attitude around that word.

Embree added:

"He touched a hot stove. I'll be surprised if he touches it again."

- [CU's latest: Updated football recruiting list](#)
- [Controversy: Yuri Wright brings baggage to CU](#)
- [Woody Paige: Twitter mistake can be teaching tool](#)

Find Nick Groke on Twitter [@NickGroke](#) ^[3]

And reach him at ngroke@denverpost.com

ARTICLE PRINTED FROM THE FIELD HOUSE

<http://blogs.denverpost.com/colleges/2012/02/01/jon-embree-talks-about-yuri-wrights-commitment-to-colorado-he-touched-a-hot-stove/22859/>

URLs in this post:

[1] expelled from school recently for a slew of sexually explicit and racially offensive twitter messages:
http://www.denverpost.com/colleges/ci_19865056

The Field House — Blogs — The Denver Post

FEBRUARY 2, 2012, 9:33 AM

CU football recruiting: Good things come in threes?

By **TOM KENSLE** |  No Comments

BOULDER — Colorado football coach Jon Embree seems to have a new favorite nickname: “The D.C.3.”

He’s referring to three signees from H.D. Woodson High School in Washington D.C. — cornerbacks Kenneth Crawley and John Walker and defensive end De’Jon Wilson.

Colorado also inked three players from Upland High School in Southern California: running back Donta Abron, safety Marques Mosley and fullback Christian Powell.

According to research by the CU sports information department, this marked the first time that the Buffs landed three recruits from the same high school since 1985 when defensive end Terry Jones, running back Jeff Knabenshue and defensive tackle Brad Robinson came from Smoky Hill in Aurora.

This year’s CU recruiting class also includes twin brothers: Offensive lineman Jeromy Irwin and tight end Sean Irwin from Cy-Fair HS in Cypress, Texas, near Houston.

“They’ll have somebody to listen to and have empathy for when they go through things,” Embree said of signing multiple players from the same high school.

As for ready-made roommates, don’t count on it. Embree’s policy when assigning roommates for road trips is to split up friends (and players of the same position) so they get to know others on the roster.

ARTICLE PRINTED FROM THE FIELD HOUSE

<http://blogs.denverpost.com/colleges/2012/02/02/cu-football-recruiting-good-things-come-in-threes/22886/>

Click [here](#) to print.

All contents [Copyright © 2011 The Denver Post](#) or other copyright holders. All rights reserved. | [Privacy Policy](#) | This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed for any commercial purpose.



Get the mobile app

COLLEGE

WESTLAKE PIPELINE FLOWING TO COLORADO FOOTBALL PROGRAM

By Rhiannon Potkey

Published Wednesday, February 1, 2012

The recruiter just kept hounding Westlake High defensive lineman John Stuart.

He would send him tweets and text messages at all hours and approach him at practice every day.

Every message was the same: "When are you coming to Colorado?"

But the recruiter didn't have to worry about violating any NCAA rules because the recruiter was Stuart's fellow defensive lineman, Justin Solis.

The sales pitch finally paid off.

The Westlake duo will remain teammates for a few more years.

Solis and Stuart made their decision official on Wednesday by signing their national letters of intent to attend the University of Colorado.

Their commitment continued the Westlake pipeline flowing to Boulder.

Solis and Stuart will be joining former Westlake wide receiver Nelson Spruce and center Brad Cotner as members of the Buffaloes.

"I am happy Johnny is coming with me. Having so many Westlake kids up there makes it easier to assimilate to the new environment," Solis said. "Me and Johnny are already talking about rooming together, and the coaches have said we could. It should be fun."

Solis and Stuart celebrated their signing during the Ventura County Football Coaches Association's luncheon at the Clarion Palm Garden Hotel in Newbury Park.

They are part of a rush of local players heading to the Centennial State this year.

Oxnard High's Joseph Turner signed with the University of Northern Colorado, Moorpark's Bobby Eckert signed with Western State College of Colorado and Ventura's Nick Januska is heading to Colorado State.

Stuart's decision came down to a matter of comfort. After visiting Washington State, he realized just how much he loved Colorado.

"The coaches and the chemistry with the team is great," Stuart said. "The players there want to become something great like they were in the past. They have brought in all their coaches that played for the national championship team and everyone wants to get back to that stage where Colorado is a threat."

Solis and Stuart will be going from one of the best football teams in the area to one of the worst football teams in the Pacific-12 Conference.

Colorado finished tied for last place with a 2-7 record in their conference debut.

But for Solis, that was one of the allures of choosing the school.

"I take it as a challenge and all the kids who signed took it as a challenge," Solis said. "Most of us are used to winning and we want to bring Colorado back to prominence and make them good again."

As Solis and Stuart mingled with other players at the luncheon, Solis' grandmother, Barbara Owens, rushed around taking pictures.

Owens was proudly wearing a Colorado sweatshirt and black-and-gold beads around her neck.

It's a color scheme becoming very familiar on the Westlake campus these days.

"It is going to be good to know there are players there you can trust and you played with before," Stuart said. "It will fun to play with them, and I know they are recruiting more kids from Westlake like Dashon Hunt. There might be even more of us in the future."



post



tweet



email

RELATED STORIES

Payton's switch to UCLA highlights local signing day

Updated 5:11 p.m. 1 Comment

COLLEGE

Sports briefs: Report: Fine's wife slept with players

Published Yesterday

Local Chatter: Alston may have D-League return on his radar

Published Yesterday

STORY SEARCH

[Switch to full desktop version](#)

Obituaries

[View the latest obits](#)

[Print Subscription](#) [Conversations](#) [Today's Paper](#)
[Going Out Guide](#) [Jobs](#) [Cars](#) [Real Estate](#) [Rentals](#) [Classifieds](#)
[POLITICS](#) [OPINIONS](#) [LOCAL](#) [SPORTS](#) [National](#) [World](#) [Business](#) [Investigations](#) [Lifestyle](#) [Entertainment](#) [Multimedia](#)
[Make us your start page](#)
[Personalize](#)
[Redskins/NFL](#) [Capitals/NHL](#) [Wizards/NBA](#) [Nationals/MLB](#) [DC United/Soccer](#) [Colleges](#) [AllMetSports](#) [Other Sports](#) [Blogs & Columns](#) [Post Tickets](#)
[In the News](#) [Fab Melo](#) [Mark Cuban](#) [Angelo Dundee](#) [Shane Beamer](#) [Edwin Jackson](#)


POINTS ON AIRFARE

Complete coverage

- [AllMetSports.com](#)
- [Recruit watch](#)
- [Leaders](#)

[Josh Barr and AllMetSports](#) | [Fan on Facebook](#) | E-mail alerts: [Redskins](#) and [Sports](#) | [RSS](#)

TEXT ALERTS

For breaking Redskins news, text "REDSKINS" to 98999.

For breaking sports news alerts, text "SPORTS" to 98999.

Posted at 11:25 AM ET, 02/01/2012

Colorado football signing day 2012: Kenneth Crawley, John Walker, DeJon Wilson head to Boulder

 By [James Wagner](#)


The 'DC3': DeJon Wilson, Kenneth Crawley, John Walker. (Courtesy of John Walker)

The nickname was first spawned by Colorado fans on Twitter, trying to convince H.D. Woodson [All-Met](#) defensive back [Kenneth Crawley](#) to commit to the Buffaloes. They suggested "DC3" as a moniker for the potential trio of [H.D. Woodson](#) players that could be playing together if Crawley, a former Tennessee recruit, joined his teammates in Boulder.

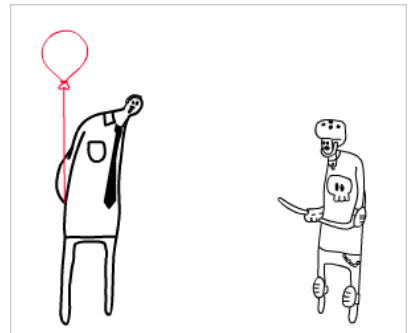
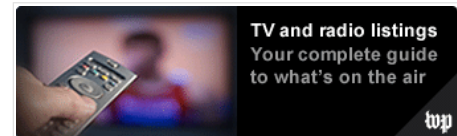
In November, 2010 All-Met defensive end [DeJon Wilson](#), a former Kansas recruit, [became the first Warrior to commit to the Buffaloes](#). Then came senior defensive back [John Walker](#) in mid-December. And when Crawley [announced his decision to attend Colorado last week](#), the three players began publicly

embracing their group's new name, often adding it to tweets about their excitement to sign with the school and play together. All three players signed their letters-of-intent this morning.

"I always wanted to play with teammates," said Crawley, who spurned offers from Auburn, Clemson, Georgia, Michigan State and Oklahoma, among others. "With us going to the same school, I got that chance do that."

Before playing together this season, the trio had crossed paths when they were younger, playing basketball against each other. But as high schoolers, the three didn't get a chance to unite forces on the football field until senior year when Walker transferred from Carroll over the summer.

When [Walker wanted to commit to Colorado](#) over Kansas, Northwestern, Rutgers and Syracuse, he talked it over with his family and Wilson. Playing with him "was very important to me," Walker said.


 Powered by **Trove**


Stats, scores and schedules

NFL	NBA	NHL	NCAA BK
Scores	Scores	Scores	Scores
Standings	Standings	Standings	Standings
Statistics	Leaders	Statistics	Statistics

The Post Most: Sports

Most Popular

1. [Patriots are unmatched at the Super Bowl surge; Giants good at finishing things off, too](#)
2. [Angelo Dundee, legendary trainer of Muhammad Ali and Sugar Ray Leonard, dies at age 90](#)
3. [Angelo Dundee, trainer of Muhammad Ali, dead at 90](#)
4. [Angelo Dundee dies: Muhammad Ali, Sugar Ray Leonard trainer remembered as legendary motivator](#)
5. [Darrell Green told Marty Schottenheimer's wife she wasn't in Kansas anymore](#)

[Top Galleries](#)
[Top Videos](#)

Chat Schedule

Sports talk with Tracee Hamilton

Transcript

12:00 PM	Color of Money Live LIVE NOW
1:00 PM	Got Plans? The Going Out Gurus and Chris Jenkins of The Root D.C. talk about Black

SEARCH THIS BLOG

SUBSCRIBE

RECENT POSTS

[Dunbar's Daniel Nwosu signs with Colorado State](#)

[Meade's Moise Larose drawing attention](#)

[Looking at the top local high school football prospects in the class of 2014](#)

[Looking ahead to national signing day](#)

2013: Kendall Fuller, Jonathan Allen and other top recruits
Penn State football signing day 2012: Brent Wilkerson

Stories By Date
Full Monthly Archive

But Wilson didn't start the trend. When he committed to the Buffaloes in November, he cited current Colorado freshman Sherrard Harrington, a friend of Wilson's and former H.D. Woodson player, as an influence. Among the current H.D. Woodson players was also a desire to get away from Washington, even though they admit it'll be much different from home.

"It's not like the city life," Crawley said. "We're going to experience some new things."

More coverage on [AllMetSports.com](#)

[H.D. Woodson team page](#)

2011 All-Met football team: [Defense](#)

For an up-to-date list of all D.C.-area athletes and their college choices, check out [Recruit Watch](#)

Follow AllMetSports.com on [Twitter](#)

Like AllMetSports.com on [Facebook](#)



[View Photo Gallery: Top football recruits](#)

By [James Wagner](#) | 11:25 AM ET, 02/01/2012

Previous: [National Signing Day 2012: All-Met Offensive Player of the Year Rob Chesson signs with Towson](#)

Next: [National Signing Day 2012: Centreville two-time All-Met Ken Ekanem chooses Virginia Tech](#)

0

Comments

[Discussion Policy](#) | [FAQ](#) | [About Discussions](#)

Add your comment

[Read about the changes to comment thread appearance, moderation.](#)

Type your comment here

Read what others are saying

About Badges

Top Comments (0)

All Comments (0)

Sort

Comments: Newest to Oldest

Pause loading new comments

History Month, nightlife, dining and entertainment. [LIVE NOW](#)

2:00 PM [Celebrityology Live](#) [LIVE NOW](#)

Earlier Today

11:00 AM [Q&A with Tracee Hamilton](#)

11:00 AM [Eddie Ross on redecorating with what you've got | Home Front](#)

12:00 PM [Abortion in the news: Are the decisions by Komen and VA senate ethical?](#)

[Weekly schedule, past shows](#)

Sports Newsletters

Sign-up for e-mail newsletters and alerts and get the news you need delivered directly to your inbox.

☐ The Insider

☐ Sports News Alerts

☐ Sports Daily

Enter your e-mail address

Subscribe

[See all Washington Post Newsletters](#)

Featured Advertiser Links



LUNG CANCER? Call us.



HIP REPLACEMENT -- did you get one after '03?

Sign up for official email updates from Barack Obama's campaign.

Looking to buy a home? Visit TWP Real Estate section for the latest open houses.

Make Your Vanguard Investing More Profitable - Free Research Report Reveals Best & Worst Funds

Sponsored Links

"Strange Fruit Burns Fat"

Burns 8.9 Pounds of Fat Every 28 Days. Can It Work for You Too?

[www.HLifestyles.com](#)

Penny Stocks Jumping 2100%+

Which stocks have the potential to jump 2000%+ this week? We'll tell you... 100% FREE!

[www.SuperiorPennyStocks.com](#)

Scientology is

a new kind of religion. Helping people to understand each other.

[Scientology.org/What_Is_Scientology](#)

[Buy a link here](#)