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## CU Buffs have not emphasized running game

By Tom Kensler  
*The Denver Post*

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For an offense purported to be run-oriented, Colorado's sure hasn't resembled that. Not after two games, anyway.

First-year CU coach Jon Embree has preached about making a statement each week with a downhill running game. So far, it's only the stats that have gone downhill.

En route to 1,318 yards in 2010, tailback Rodney Stewart failed to reach 80 yards in net rushing only twice — against Colorado State (67) and Texas Tech (34).

Stewart hasn't managed 80 yards in either game as a senior: 52 net yards at Hawaii on Sept. 3 and 73 on Saturday in the Buffaloes' 36-33 overtime loss to California at Folsom Field.

"We will get (the running game) going," Stewart vowed Saturday.

Stewart averaged just 3.0 yards per attempt against California. Had Stewart been just a tad more successful, Colorado might stand 1-1 entering this Saturday's game against Colorado State (2-0) at Sports Authority Field at Mile High instead of still looking for the first victory of the Embree era.

In overtime against Cal, Stewart rambled for two of his best carries of the game with gains of 9

and 12 yards to set up a first-and-goal situation at the Golden Bears' 4-yard line. But Stewart smacked into a veritable brick wall on his next two attempts, for no gain and a loss of a yard.

After a pass incompleteness, Colorado had to settle for a field goal. That gave Cal an opportunity to claim victory in the first overtime period with a touchdown, which the Bears accomplished.

Granted, Colorado produced more than 30 points against a Cal team that had blasted the Buffs 52-7 a year earlier. And school records were set by quarterback Tyler Hansen (474 yards passing) and wideout Paul Richardson (284 yards receiving). That's encouraging.

Embree said afterward "the offense started to look like an offense." But there's no question that he won't feel good about things until the running game clicks.

"I feel like we're still a running team," starting center Daniel Mun-ye said Saturday. "We've all just got to come together."

Embree was asked after the game about the two Stewart runs in overtime that were stopped near the goal line. The coach sounded like positive yardage should almost be automatic.



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"I don't know what happened, because we ran a play called 'blast,' " Embree said. "It's downhill and up the gut. We'd been hitting them with it. I don't know if someone fell off a block or missed a cut. . . . If we are going to be what we say we are, if we are going to have that identity that we want to have in this program, those have to be no-brainers."

Complicating matters, Stewart ran behind a makeshift offensive line that required on-the-fly juggling because of injuries. The regular starting left tackle, sophomore David Bakhtiari (knee vs. Hawaii), didn't play against Cal. His replacement, junior Ryan Dannewitz, went out for a time with a dinged knee. A true freshman, Alex Lewis, filled in temporarily for Dannewitz.

Then starting right tackle Jack Harris injured his right ankle and was replaced by Sione Tau, a fifth-year senior who had only blocked on special teams during his CU career.

Bakhtiari's injury didn't require surgery and his availability for this week is listed as "day to day." His return for Saturday's game against CSU would help immensely — Buffs offensive line coach Steve Marshall calls the left tackle the best O-lineman on the team.

The extent of Harris' injury hasn't been announced, but it doesn't look good. He emerged from the CU locker room on crutches, wearing a protective boot over his right foot.

"I don't know," Harris said when asked about the severity.

If Bakhtiari is back for the CSU game but Harris is out, Dannewitz could slide over to starting right tackle in place of the less-experienced Tau. But regardless of the personnel, CU's offensive line must play better and with a lot more focus, Embree said. Five false starts, including two flinched snaps by freshman Munyer, became momentum killers.

"I will get that fixed," Embree said.

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Chris Dempsey, The Denver Post

## CU Buffs eyeing ... Colorado State Rams

Posted: 09/12/2011 01:00:00 AM MDT

**For the record:** CSU has a 2-0 start after beating New Mexico (14-10) and Northern Colorado (33-14).

**Streaking:** Though their games with CU usually are hotly contested, the Rams have won just twice in their last eight meetings with the Buffs.

**Who's hot:** Senior tailback Raymond Carter, who rushed for 100 yards and two touchdowns on 18 carries against UNC and is averaging 5.2 yards per carry this season.

**Who's not:** Sophomore quarterback Pete Thomas. His completion percentage (.735) is terrific, but he has more interceptions (three) than touchdown passes (two) so far.

**Key stat:** CSU is allowing only 12 points per game this season.

**FYI:** Sophomore linebacker Mike Orakpo is off to a solid start, leading the Rams with 18 tackles. He had 10 (eight solo) against UNC. . . . CSU has scored 21 of its 47 points in the second quarter. . . . CSU is just 8-of-27 on third-down conversions this season.

**Injury report:** Senior linebacker Mychal Sisson, who suffered a broken ankle against UNC, is out for the CU game. Fullbacks Austin Gillmore (knee) and Jake Levin (knee) and defensive lineman Scott Carter (knee) are questionable, if not doubtful.



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## CSU Rams eyeing ... Colorado Buffaloes

*Tom Kensler, The Denver Post*

Posted: 09/12/2011 01:00:00 AM MDT

**For the record:** After a 36-33 overtime loss against California, the Buffs are still looking for the first victory of the Jon Embree era. Colorado (0-2) played much better than in its opener, a 34-17 loss at Hawaii.

**Streaking:** Wide receiver Paul Richardson, a speedy sophomore from Los Angeles, set a CU record against Cal for most receiving yards in a game (284) and tied a CU record for catches (11). He notched his fourth two-touchdown game (66 and 78 yards) and has 10 TDs in his past eight games, dating to last season.

**Who's hot:** Against Cal, senior quarterback Tyler Hansen set a CU record for most yards passing in a game (474) and, with 500 total yards, he tied the 1999 school mark of Mike Moschetti. Hansen wasn't sacked and didn't throw an interception.

**Who's not:** Playing at Folsom Field, the Buffs were penalized 12 times against Cal for a total of 98 yards.

**Key stat:** Zero sacks allowed by CU's offensive line. One week earlier, Hawaii sacked Hansen seven times.

**FYI:** Wide receiver Tyler McCulloch, a lightly recruited, late signee in February from Albuquerque, became the seventh CU player since 1973 to start a game as a true freshman. He had two catches for 11 yards against Cal.

**Injury report:** Starting offensive right tackle Jack Harris likely won't play this week in Denver against Colorado State because of an ankle



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**The Field House — Blogs — The Denver Post**

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SEPTEMBER 12, 2011, 8:12 AM

## Loss to Cal was a first for CU in one regard

By **TOM KENSLE** |  No Comments

Among the stats and notes provided by the University of Colorado sports information department Saturday night after CU's 36-33 overtime loss to California was this:

It marked the first time since 1972 that Colorado had lost a game when it did not commit a turnover or yield a sack, snapping a string of 14 straight victories.

Other notes:

With 474 yards, CU's surpassed 400 yards passing for the first time since throwing for 401 against Texas A&M in Boulder on Oct. 8, 2005.

Colorado is now 5-5 in overtime games. The last was the 17-14 win over West Virginia in Boulder on Sept. 18, 2008.

Nine true freshman have now played. Three — defensive back Will Harlos, offensive lineman Alex Lewis and receiver Austin Vincent — made their debuts against Cal.

Tyler Hansen's 49 pass attempts without an interception set a school record. The previous mark was 44 by Cody Hawkins last year in a loss at Oklahoma.

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## Later CU-CSU football date no buzzkill

### Embree pleased to see Rams in Week 3

**By Joshua Linden**stein Camera Sports Writer  
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:09/11/2011 11:07:37 PM MDT

Like many of his players now, Colorado football coach Jon Embree's favorite memory of the rivalry with Colorado State is his first.

He was a freshman in 1983, and CU and CSU hadn't played in 25 years. It was Year 2 of coach Bill McCartney's rebuilding efforts. Year 1 had been a rough one, and the Buffs were coming off of an opening-week loss at Michigan State.

The Rams brought to Boulder the prolific receiving duo of Jeff Champine and the late Keli McGregor, who would go on to become president of the Colorado Rockies. But the Buffaloes celebrated a 31-3 triumph that day.

"That was my first time being in Folsom Field and it was just special," Embree said recently. "There was a lot of intensity."

And the atmosphere was hardly dampened by the fact that the game wasn't the first of the season.

When the Buffs and Rams knock heads at Sports Authority Field in Denver on Saturday, it will mark just the third time in 15 years that the game hasn't been the season opener for CU. But as far as the players are concerned, it really doesn't matter on which week the game falls. And with Nebraska off the schedule, the CSU game is the only rivalry game for the Buffaloes, at least until something gets stirred up with one of their new Pac-12 Conference brethren.

"Either way it's going to be a heated, intense game," CU quarterback Tyler Hansen said. "It's fun either way. First game of the year, third game of the year, it really doesn't matter."

The ritual of opening the season against the Rams is a fairly recent development relative to the entire scope of the series. Before that 25-year hiatus, the game was traditionally an October or November affair. While the game opened CU's season a trio of times in the 1980s and early 90s, it wasn't until 1997 that it got a serious hold on that spot.

For current players, though, opening the year against CSU is all they knew before this season's trip to Hawaii.

"That was a lot different not having our main focus on (CSU)," CU tailback Rodney Stewart said of offseason workouts and fall camp.

Plenty of theories exist about the ideal timing for rivalry games.

There are plenty who believe playing the Rams -- and their lesser mid-major conference talent base -- in the first game of the season helps level the playing field for little brother by giving CSU a full offseason to scheme exclusively for the Buffs. Colorado is 11-6 (.647 winning percentage) in openers against the Rams and 49-14-2 (.754) the rest of the time.

Embree downplays that notion given the upsets that happen across the country throughout the entire season. But he does prefer the game in Week 3.

As a coach, he said, it takes away some of the pressure to be secretive about what you're doing during spring ball and fall camp. If you've got a new scheme you want to get ready for the first game, there's a lot less chance that Hawaii is going to get a good look at it in your spring game than CSU coaches might. And by game 3, all of your secrets are on film anyway.

Particularly coming in as a new coaching staff with new wrinkles up its sleeve, Embree said facing CSU in Week 3 made him feel more comfortable about opening the first three weeks of August camp to the public than he would normally have been, knowing that it didn't matter as much if CSU coaches got a whiff or two of what the Buffs had brewing.

"It definitely did change it for me," Embree said.

While the spotlight on the CU-CSU game from a national standpoint might be brighter in Week 1 when most of the nation's top programs are playing snoozers against the Chattanooga of the world, enthusiasm locally for the rivalry might get an added boost this year without Nebraska in the mix.

For Embree and multiple players, the CSU rivalry will never be able to replace the one with Nebraska just like CU could never replace Wyoming for the Rams. The CU-CSU clash, they said, stands on its own merits for what it is -- an in-state duel between squads a mere 45 miles apart.

That said, senior offensive lineman Ryan Miller admits he and other Buffs might have a little more competitive juice flowing for the Rams this year given all of the change headed CU's way in a new conference.

Colorado is contracted to play the Rams through at least 2019, with season openers against CSU in all but the 2015 game (at Hawaii).

"It's kind of a little piece of the past we still get to hold onto a little bit," Miller said. "It's great moving forward into this new conference and everything. But we'll always have CSU (as a rival)."

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