



Senior running back Rodney Stewart
Photo Courtesy: Dan A. Madden



Brooks: Moniz Foots The Bill For CU's Opening Act

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Untitled Document

HONOLULU – Turns out, the big preseason question of whether Colorado's rebuilt secondary could hold up to Hawai'i's passing game wasn't the biggest one for the Buffaloes.

Instead, as they prepared for Jon Embree's CU coaching debut, the Buffs should have been asking themselves this: Can UH quarterback Bryant Moniz beat us with his feet rather than his arm?

In a word, the answer was yes – although CU didn't go away quietly into this breezy, balmy Pacific night.

Known on the islands as "Mighty Mo," Moniz made sure that Embree's first night on the sidelines would be a memorable one for all the wrong reasons, leading the Warriors to a 34-17 win Saturday in Aloha Stadium and extending the Buffs' road

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losing streak to 18 – 19 counting postseason play.

"I don't know if it was first-game jitters or what," Embree said. "But that wasn't us...We'll figure it out. There's no magic solution; we've got to get better."



Trailing 17-0 at half, CU finally shook its offense awake and pulled to within 24-17 early in the fourth quarter. But the Warriors, set on avenging last season's loss in Boulder, put away their mainland visitors with a touchdown and a field goal in the game's final 6:17.

The Buffs (0-1) return to Folsom Field next Saturday to face Cal in their 2011 home opener.

In opening the Embree Era, the Buffs did little right in the opening half, falling behind 17-0 after allowing Moniz to shred them with his feet rather than his arm.

In last season's 31-13 CU win in Boulder, the UH quarterback was limited to minus-5 yards rushing on just six attempts. A year later, with three of the Warriors' top four receivers gone, the UH coaching staff obviously wanted to use Moniz differently – and CU's defense allowed it.

By halftime, Moniz had rushed nine times for a career-high 120 yards, including a career-long 57 yarder in the second quarter. That dash through the middle of CU's defense resulted in a touchdown, as did a 14-yard option carry later in the same quarter.

The Warriors' other first-half points came on a 38-yard field goal by Kenton Chun that pin-balled its way through in the first quarter, caroming off the right upright before bouncing off the crossbar and falling on the correct side.

Moniz passed for 330 yards (27-of-41, one TD, one INT) last season against CU. In Saturday night's first half, he completed 10-of-19 for 100 yards and was sacked three times. He finished with 121 yards rushing and 178 passing, with one passing touchdown. All total, he accounted for 299 yards in total offense and four TDs.

"We knew No. 17 (Moniz) was a heck of a player," Embree said. "We knew he could run...he just made two plays where he was better than us."

Added junior linebacker Jon Major: "I never thought he'd beat us with his legs . . . he's a great competitor; hats off to him."

CU's offense went stagnant early and stayed that way through the first half. The Buffs rushed for only 54 yards in the first two quarters – a huge comedown from the season-best 252 yards they rolled up last season against the Warriors. The Buffs drove only as far as the Warriors' 32-yard line in the first half before that march fizzled when senior tailback Rodney "Speedy" Stewart was thrown for a 7-yard loss when he couldn't turn the left corner. Stewart finished with 52 yards on 18 carries, and CU was outgained 343-240 in total offense.

Senior quarterback Tyler Hansen said "little things" in the first half helped the Buffs "beat themselves." A fumbled snap on the first play from scrimmage set an ugly tone for the first half, and the loss of left tackle David Bakhtiari a little later might have further disrupted the offense.

CU's passing game numbers were even bleaker than the first-half running stats, with Hansen completing 5-of-12 passes for 46 yards. He finished 16-of-30 for 223 yards and two scores. He was intercepted once and sacked seven times for 35 yards in losses, which reduced CU's rushing total to a mere 17 yards.

But, said Hansen, "We got ourselves back in the game, but we've got to be better. (UH) made a good defensive adjustment with their pass rush in the third quarter. They put our tackles and our O-line on their heels."

The best the Buffs could hope for was a second-half rejuvenation like they fashioned last season in Boulder. In that game, CU trailed UH 10-0, but took over the afternoon with a punishing ground game and stiffened on defense, allowing the Warriors only three second-half points while the Buffs offense punched up 31.

But that was at home – and on this Labor Day Weekend, the comforts of home seemed very, very far away for CU.

The Buffs, who had won the opening coin toss and deferred to the second half, made that decision appear fortuitous. They opened the half with a six-play, 73-yard drive that was highlighted by a Hansen-to-Stewart run-and-catch on a screen for 52 yards to the Warriors' 15. A play later, Hansen hit Paul Richardson for the touchdown and after freshman Will Oliver's PAT – the first of his college career – the Buffs had pulled within 17-7.

If there was a hint of momentum shift, it evaporated on CU's ensuing kickoff, which was returned the Buffs' 48-yard line. From there, Moniz needed 10 plays to stake UH to another 17-point lead. He scored his third rushing TD of the game – adding another career-best in a night already bulging with them – untouched on a 1-yard keeper that pushed the Warriors ahead 24-7 with 5:53 left in the third quarter.

But two series later, the Buffs – primarily Hansen and “P-Rich,” with another assist from Stewart – made some more noise. After another successful Hansen-to-Stewart screen, Hansen and Richardson again teamed for a TD strike – this one covering 21 yards, and with Oliver's extra point, drawing CU to within 24-14 with 1:51 left in the third quarter.

On the first play of the Warriors' next possession, Buffs defensive end Chidera Uzo-Diribe blasted Moniz from the blind side, forcing a fumble that was recovered by nosetackle Conrad Obi at the UH 34-yard line. CU moved to the 15 on a Hansen-to-Tyler McCulloch pass, then lost 3 yards to set up a critical third-and-12 as the fourth quarter began.

Hansen was pressured into a throw-away on third down, and Oliver kicked a 34-yard field goal on fourth down, pulling the Buffs within a touchdown (24-17) only 9 seconds into the last quarter. Time was on the Buffs' side if they could successfully cope with Moniz – and the next series they did, forcing a three-and-out.

“We came back... we were there,” Embree said. “Then they hit us with the shovel pass...”

And just as quickly, the Buffs were reeling once more.

With 12:53 remaining and needing a touchdown to tie, CU took over at its 22-yard line and promptly lost 17 yards, including 11 on back-to-back sacks of Hansen. Freshman Darragh O'Neill was forced to punt from his end zone, and at the CU 45, UH had the field position it needed to possibly put this one away.

The Warriors pushed to the Buffs' 24, where on fourth-and-one Moniz – who else? – sneaked over left guard for 2 yards and a monstrous first down. Three plays later, Moniz took advantage of CU's inside rush and flipped a shovel pass to running back Joey Isofea, who ran 22 yards for his first career TD. Chun's PAT sent UH up 31-17 with 6:17 left.

The Buffs needed something big in a little time – but they couldn't make it happen. Going for it on fourth-and-six at their 29 yard line, Hansen was intercepted by linebacker Art Laurel, giving the Warriors a first down at the Buffs' 11-yard line.

Five plays later, Tyler Hadden kicked a 22-yard field goal, giving UH 34-17 advantage and sending CU on its way with the unsightly road losing streak intact.

Asked about his coaching debut in general, Embree said, “It was not good, we lost . . . I'm not a moral victory guy. We've got to break this losing streak on the road.”

But first comes Cal, which buried CU 52-7 last season in Berkeley, then in-state rival Colorado State (Sept. 17) before a trip to Ohio State (Sept. 24) closes out the month. By then, Embree hopes the Buffs will have found themselves, or whatever was AWOL in his opener.

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SPORTS

Bufs Road Woes Continue In Embree's Coaching Debut

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Jon Embree (credit: CBS)

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HONOLULU (AP) — For Jon Embree, it was tough taking away any positives in his Colorado coaching debut.

The Buffaloes managed to shut down Hawaii's high-powered passing attack, but still couldn't get it done on the road, losing to the Warriors 34-17 in the season opener for both teams Saturday night.

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Besides spoiling the Embree's debut, the loss extended the Buffaloes' road losing streak to 18 straight, 19 counting the 2007 Independence Bowl. Colorado hasn't won on the road since beating Texas Tech on Oct. 27, 2007.

"There is no bright side. I'm not a moral victory guy," Embree said. "We did not win. That was our goal. We got to end this losing streak on the road. That is the goal right now. We didn't do that."

The Buffaloes, making their debut as a member of the Pac-12, just couldn't stop Hawaii quarterback Bryant Moniz, who ran for a career-best 121 yards and three touchdowns.

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Moniz, who had just 102 yards rushing in 2010 while leading the nation in passing, rushed for 120 yards and two TDs in the first half alone. He also threw a 22-yard touchdown pass to Joey Iosefa in the fourth quarter to help seal the victory for the Warriors.

His scoring runs of 57 and 14 yards gave Hawaii a 17-0 halftime lead. He added a 1-yard TD in the third quarter, pushing the lead back to 17.

"We held them in check throwing the ball, but he beat us with his legs," Embree said.

It was a surprising performance for Moniz, who last year became just the 11th FBS quarterback to surpass 5,000 yards in a season. Moniz was 20 of 33 for 178 yards, far below his nation-leading 360-yard average last year.

"I'd rather throw for 500 yards and three touchdowns, but it's just one of those things that you need to make plays," Moniz said.

Moniz turned to the ground after having trouble finding his range. Moniz scrambled for a 22-yard gain in the first quarter and two plays later broke a 34-yard run, leading to a field goal. He then broke a career-long 57-yard TD run in the second quarter to put Hawaii up 10-0. Moniz faked a handoff, sidestepped a defender and sprinted untouched the rest of the way.

With 24 seconds left in the half, Moniz kept it on an option and scored on the 14-yarder.

Colorado was hoping history would repeat itself. It was down 10-0 at halftime to Hawaii last year in Boulder, but rallied in the second half and won 31-13.

Hawaii learned its lesson not to get too comfortable. McMackin called two consecutive timeouts during the third quarter and made sure his players didn't let this one slip away.

"We just had a little visit and talked family business," McMackin said. "I won't say what was said, but it took me two timeouts to get everything I wanted to say done. The official gave me a weird look."



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interesting at the start of the fourth quarter, taking advantage of a Hawaii turnover and cutting the lead to 24-17 on Will Oliver's 34-yard field goal. Moniz fumbled as he was hit by Chidera Uzo-Diribe.

"I told the team at halftime, don't worry about it. Let's just come out and play and they did," Embree said.

"We came back and we got it to seven, so we were there. ... But I thought at halftime that we were going to win and I thought

we were going to win when we were down a score at the end. So it's disappointing."

Colorado punted on all five of its first-half possessions. The Buffaloes finally woke up in the second half behind quarterback Tyler Hansen, who hadn't played a game since rupturing his spleen Oct. 23.

"We were awful in the first half. I don't know what that was," Embree said.

Hansen connected with Paul Richardson for two scores in the third quarter. One was a 21-yarder that cut the lead to 24-14. Earlier in the quarter, he caught a 6-yard pass to get Colorado on the scoreboard. That 73-yard scoring drive included a 52-yard pass play from Hansen to Rodney Stewart, who found an opening along the right sideline.

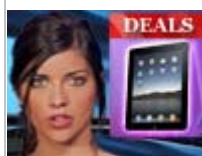
Hansen was 16 of 30 for 223 yards and two touchdowns. But he was sacked a career-high seven times and threw a late interception, ending any chance of a comeback.



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Disappointed CU Buffs know there's work to do

Running game didn't materialize in loss to Hawaii

By Ryan Thorburn, Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:09/04/2011 01:45:29 PM MDT



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HONOLULU -- The Buffs came here to impose their will.

Colorado wanted to establish itself as a team capable of running the ball, even when the Hawaii defense knew what was coming.

True to his word, offensive coordinator Eric Bieniemy called 12 rushing plays on first down. The Buffs averaged 1.1 yards on those snaps.

And that, more than anything else, was the most disappointing aspect of CU's 34-17 loss to Hawaii on Saturday night at Aloha Stadium.

"We're not the most talented team out there, so we have to do it the right way," a disappointed Jon Embree said after losing his debut as head coach. "We can't put

ourselves in second-and-long, we can't miss an assignment, we can't have illegal procedure, we can't have a holding call bring a 20-yard run back. We're not good enough to do that."

CU had the ball six times in the first half. Walk-on freshman punter Darragh O'Neill punted five times, and time ran out on the other drive.

The Buffs trailed 17-0 at the intermission before Tyler Hansen, Rodney Stewart and Paul Richardson started creating some highlights for the visitors.

"Guys were trying to make too much happen," said Hansen, who was 5-for-12 passing for 46 yards in the first half. "We've just got to relax and let the plays develop."

Embree and Bieniemy don't want to hear any excuses. However, the loss of starting left tackle David Bakhtiari to a sprained knee in the first quarter was obviously a problem for the offensive line.

"(Bakhtiari) is a great player and he is a great tackle. That hurts us a lot," Hansen said. "Hopefully he's all right, because that definitely messed up a little of our chemistry."

CU's offense began to click after the intermission.

Hansen capped off a six-play, 73-yard drive with a 15-yard touchdown pass to Paul Richardson. The Hansen-Richardson combination struck again to complete a four-play, 63-yard drive with 1:51 remaining in the third quarter.

"We executed better, we played faster, but we have to learn to come out that way at the beginning," Bieniemy said. "I thought communication-wise we did a great job, there were no issues with that. The thing I just want to keep harping on is: We've got to do our jobs and pay attention to details. Right now, we're not a detail-oriented

offense. We were in the third quarter for a period of time, but that falls back on us. ...

"I promise you we will get better."

Hawaii head coach Greg McMackin called a timeout in the third quarter to make adjustments. When the officials signaled that it was time to resume the game, he called another timeout.

"We just had a little visit and talked family business," McMackin said. "I won't say what was said, but it took me two timeouts to get everything I wanted to say done. The official gave me a weird look."

CU's defense, which held the Warriors' vaunted run-and-shoot passing attack to 178 net yards, put the Buffs in position to complete the second-half comeback when defensive end Chidera Uzo-Diribe forced a Bryant Moniz fumble that was recovered by Conrad Obi.

The turnover set up a 34-yard field goal by Will Oliver that cut the deficit to 24-17 with 14:51 remaining in the fourth quarter.

"We're going to go into every game feeling like we have a physical edge. That's our game and that's how we're going to play," CU linebacker Jon Major said. "We'll continue bringing it. Coaches have done a great job instilling that mindset."

After forcing Hawaii to punt on the next series, CU had the ball at its own 22 with a chance to drive down the field and tie the game.

That's when the Warriors' defensive line imposed its will.

On first down, Stewart was thrown down for a loss of one yard. Hansen was sacked on second and third down. After a delay of game penalty, O'Neill came up with a clutch 52-yard punt from the back of the end zone.

"We had a lot of momentum. It helped that we got a really good turnover and we capitalized on it," Richardson said. "But we didn't finish the game, and ultimately that's what football comes down to is the fourth quarter."

Moniz took advantage of a short field and stuck the dagger in the Buffs, a touchdown pass to give Hawaii a 14-point cushion. CU's defensive line sacked the Warriors' star quarterback five times, but "Mighty Mo" ran for 121 net yards, including three touchdowns.

"Who would have thought he would beat us with his legs? That just shows what a great player he is," Major said. "He's a competitor. Hats off to him. He did what he had to to win. That's a sign of a great player."

Stewart led the Buffs with four receptions for 98 yards but averaged 2.9 yards on 18 carries. No other CU running back touched the ball.

"We were trying to establish the run, but when they get up by a certain amount of points you don't have a lot of time and you've got to start throwing the ball," Stewart said. "That's what we did. It's just little things we've got to work on."

The Buffs appear to have big issues on the offensive line, an area of the team that was thought to be a strength. Bakhtiari came out of the visiting locker room on crutches; an exhausted Ryan Miller joined him on a golf cart ride to the bus after CU allowed Hansen to be sacked seven times.

"When you look back on it, a lot of it was four-man pressure. So we didn't do a good job of protecting," Embree said. "And protection is the quarterback getting rid of the ball, it's not just linemen blocking for five seconds. It's receivers getting open and the quarterback getting rid of the ball. We didn't do a good job of it."

Now the Buffs have to get ready for Saturday's home opener against Cal. Last season the Bears sacked Hansen seven times during a 52-7 romp in Berkeley.

"Cal got us real good and we want those guys," Hansen said. "If you're not motivated for Cal, then there is something wrong with you, because they embarrassed us last year."

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Thorburn: Pac-12 expansion doesn't benefit CU Buffs

By **Ryan Thorburn** Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:09/03/2011 08:09:53 PM MDT



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HONOLULU -- Paradise lost?

Colorado played its much-anticipated inaugural game as an official flag-waving member of the Pac-12 here on Saturday against Hawaii at Aloha Stadium.

About 1,500 Buffs fans traveled to Oahu to celebrate the seemingly bright future the athletic department and university should enjoy in the new conference.

But some old friends are threatening to spoil the party.

Word out of Norman and Austin is that the Big 12 bullies are thinking seriously about chasing Ralphie out West in the aftermath of Texas A&M's decision to leave.

This is bad news for CU.

The Pac-12 is the perfect number for the Buffs, especially playing in the South Division with UCLA and USC, which guarantees a football trip to the fertile Los Angeles recruiting grounds every fall.

Not surprisingly, CU athletic director Mike Bohn wasn't in the mood to comment on possible expansion in the press box prior to Saturday's otherwise festive opener.

Meanwhile in Dallas, Pac-12 commissioner Larry Scott said the conference is already picking up the phone as universities -- presumably Oklahoma and Texas -- call looking to revisit last summer's realignment drama.

"Schools have reached out to us," Scott told the Associated Press at the Oregon-LSU showdown. "(The Pac-12 would listen) to evaluate what might be in the best interest of our members."

The Pac-16 is not in the best interest of the University of Colorado or the Buffaloes, although being included in a 16-team mega-conference is better than the options Iowa State and Baylor might have later this month.

After years of dreaming about it, CU finally gets to associate itself academically with Cal and Stanford. And now Oklahoma State and Texas Tech could be peers again.

After struggling to keep up with the athletic department arms race dominated by Big 12 South programs, the Buffs could be asked to share the huge new pie with wealthy elite Oklahoma and Texas.

According to longtime Daily Oklahoman columnist Berry Tramel, the Pac-12 preference is to add four schools -- Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, Texas and Texas Tech.

The panic button was pushed with Texas A&M's recent decision to leave the Big 12, presumably for the SEC. (Maybe Scott can talk the Aggies into joining the Pac-12 and scratch the Red Raiders off the expansion list?)

On Friday, Oklahoma president David Boren told the Oklahoman a decision will be made sooner, pun intended, than later.

"We're a very influential member of the conference," Boren bragged. "(Oklahoma) is influential not only in this conference, but influential in athletics across the country. It's a tribute to the strength of this program.

"I'll put it this way: I don't think there's any chance OU's going to end up being a wallflower."

Orangebloods.com has reported that Big 12 commissioner Dan Beebe convened a conference call of Big 12 presidents -- excluding Boren, Texas' William Powers and Texas A&M's R. Bowen Loftin -- and urged the desperate group to petition Texas to stay put.

Austin American-Statesman columnist Kirk Bohls said the Longhorn Network -- Exhibit 1A as to why the Aggies are bolting the Big 12 -- could be morphed into the Pac-12's already amazing television deal as one of the regional networks.

Bohls predicts -- "Your new Pac-16 members: Texas, Texas Tech, Oklahoma and Oklahoma State. The era of the super conference begins."

If this plays out, the Buffs had better enjoy the one-and-redone Pac-12 season. The Pac-16 would likely divide into "traditional" eight-team divisions as follows:

The South -- Arizona, Arizona State, CU, Utah, Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, Texas and Texas Tech.

The North -- Cal, Stanford, Oregon State, Oregon, UCLA, USC, Washington and Washington State.

Paradise is not found in Lubbock or Stillwater.

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CU Buffs' freshmen see plenty of action in Hawaii

By **Ryan Thorburn** Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:09/04/2011 12:52:28 AM MDT



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HONOLULU -- True freshman walk-on punter.

Darragh O'Neill, the most inexperienced football player on the roster, calmly kept the Buffs in the game against Hawaii in the first half.

The former Fairview High School basketball standout averaged 44 yards on five punts, including a long of 56 yards and three downed inside the Warriors' 20-yard line.

If not for O'Neill's right leg, the Buffs would have trailed by more than the 17-0 halftime deficit they faced on Saturday night at Aloha Stadium.

"I felt pretty good about my performance," O'Neill said after the 34-17 loss. "I'm definitely disappointed that I had to punt that much. But I feel I went out there and did what I could do."

Meanwhile, senior quarterback Tyler Hansen and an experienced CU offensive line had trouble moving the ball until a quick-strike drive in the third quarter highlighted by a 52-yard screen pass to Rodney Stewart and a 15-yard touchdown reception by Paul Richardson.

If nothing else, youth was served some experience for the visitors.

CU brought 13 true freshmen on the trip. It would have been 14 but offensive lineman Alex Lewis (flu virus) had to stay back in Boulder.

Greg Henderson became the first true freshman to start at cornerback for CU in a season opener since Victor Scott in 1980.

Daniel Munyer was the first redshirt freshman to start at center since Andre Gurode in 1998 (who also started in the season opener), and just the third freshman to start a game at the position (Bryan Stoltenberg started all 12 games in 1992 as a redshirt; no true CU freshman has ever started a game at center).

Fullback Evan Harrington, right tackle Jack Harris and nose tackle Conrad Obi also made their first career starts for the Buffs.

Business trip

The Buffs arrived in Honolulu at 1:15 p.m. local time on Thursday and bussed to the team hotel (Marriott Ihilani). The coaches and players attended a luau at nearby Paradise Cove that evening.

On Friday, the Buffs conducted a short morning practice at Aloha Stadium. The team went to a movie (Columbiana) before conducting typical football-related meetings.

After Saturday's game, CU was to fly directly back to Denver on a Ryan Air 767 charter. The team was not expected to make it back to DIA until approximately 9:45 a.m. this morning.

Buffs coach Jon Embree did his best to make the over 6,000-mile roundtrip to paradise as normal as possible.

"We have to understand it's a business trip. Part of it is when you travel you have to paint a picture for your team," Embree said before the game. "From the itinerary, from why we're going to do things a certain way ... and why we're going to do those things and how it's going to help us win."

Cabral homecoming

Brian Cabral, the former Buffs linebacker and longtime CU assistant, wore a lavalava on the visiting sideline for his return to Hawaii.

Cabral, who was 2-1 as CU's interim head coach last season, grew up in nearby Kailua and starred at St. Louis High School.

Heading into Saturday's game, the Buffs were 6-2 when Cabral wore the traditional Polynesian wrap.

Bear market

Before Saturday's game CU athletic director Mike Bohn said ticket sales for the home opener were "not great at this point but solid."

In other words, there are plenty of tickets still available for the Cal game. However, the athletic department's goal of selling 25,000 season tickets will be reached.

Last season about 10,000 Buffs fans attended CU's 52-7 loss to Cal in Berkeley. The Sept. 10 game will be a non-conference game to complete the home-and-home, even though the programs are both members of the Pac-12.

"It's going to feel like a conference game to us," Bohn said.

Kickoff is scheduled for 1:30 p.m. at Folsom Field.

Notable

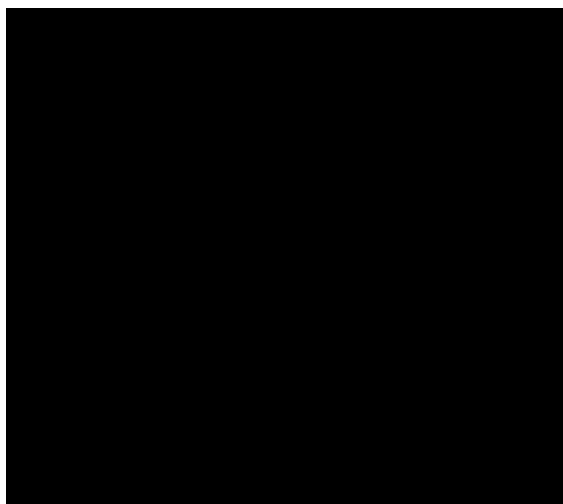
Starting left tackle David Bakhtiari suffered a knee injury in the first quarter and did not return. Ryan Dannewitz protected Hansen's blind side the rest of the game. ... CU quarterbacks coach Rip Scherer coached his first game as Hawaii's running backs coach on Sept. 10, 1977, as a member of Dick Tomey's staff. ... Saturday's game was broadcast on ESPN2. CU had not opened a season on national television since 2004 when TBS aired the Colorado State game from Boulder. ... Hawaii had a 3-3 record against Pac-10 teams at Aloha Stadium since 2005. The Warriors play at Washington next Saturday.

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Hurt by slow start, CU Buffs fall to Hawaii 34-17 in Jon Embree's coaching debut

By **Ryan Thorburn**, Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:09/04/2011 12:52:22 AM MDT



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HONOLULU -- There have been much worse head coaching debuts in Colorado's recent history.

The Buffs were clobbered 41-14 by Colorado State in Gary Barnett's first game on Sept. 4, 1999.

And Montana State stunned CU 19-10 at Folsom Field on Sept. 2, 2006, to set an ominous tone for the Dan Hawkins era.

But no first-year CU head coach has had to endure a longer trip home after his first defeat than Jon Embree did after the Buffs' 34-17 loss to Hawaii on Saturday night at Aloha Stadium in front of a crowd of 35,645.

"I'm not a moral victory guy," Embree said. "We did not win. That was our goal."

The Buffs of the Pac-12 picked up where the Buffs of the Big 12 left off, suffering the program's 18th consecutive true road loss

(19 straight out-of-state defeats including the Independence Bowl loss to Alabama) dating back to a win at Texas Tech on Oct. 27, 2007.

Entering the game, it was feared that Bryant Moniz, the nation's leading passer in 2010, would have his way with the Buffs' inexperienced cornerbacks.

But Hawaii's senior quarterback started his dark horse Heisman Trophy campaign by spreading out the CU defense and then gashing it for three touchdowns and 121 yards rushing on 14 carries.

The Buffs -- who trailed Hawaii 10-0 at halftime last season before storming back for a 31-13 victory at Folsom Field -- were down 17-0 at the intermission in the rematch.

The offense finally responded to coordinator Eric Bienenmy's pleas for a dramatic comeback in the second half.

Hansen started locating CU's best play-makers -- hitting Rodney Stewart on a 52-yard screen pass and then connecting with Paul Richardson for a 15-yard touchdown to cut the deficit to 17-7.

The Warriors answered with a scoring drive, which was capped with a 1-yard touchdown run by Moniz to take a 24-7 lead.

Hansen, playing for the first time since rupturing a spleen last October against Texas Tech, stood strong in the pocket and threw a 21-yard dart to Richardson in the end zone to bring the Buffs within 24-14 with 1:51 left in the third quarter.

And then Greg Brown's defense, which had been getting consistent pressure on Moniz throughout the game, completely shifted the momentum to the Buffs.

Chidera Uzo-Diribe sacked Moniz, forcing a fumble that Conrad Obi recovered at the Hawaii 34.

CU was unable to cash the turnover in for a touchdown, but true freshman Will Oliver's 34-yard field goal made it a one-

score game (24-17) with 14:51 remaining.

On the next Warrior possession, cornerback Greg Henderson, another true freshman, made a key third-down tackle to force a Hawaii punt.

But Hansen took back-to-back sacks, forcing walk-on freshman punter Darragh O'Neill, who had kept the Buffs in the game with five clutch boots in the first half, to kick out of his own end zone.

O'Neill delivered a booming 52-yard punt, but the Warriors had an 11-yard return and possession of the ball at the CU 45.

Moniz converted a critical fourth-and-1 and moments later slipped a sneaky pass to fullback Joey Iosefa, who stumbled, bumbled and rumbled for a 22-yard touchdown reception on third-and-10 to make the score 31-17.

A Hansen telegraph moments later was intercepted by linebacker Art Laurel, whose pick-six was negated by an illegal block.

"We killed ourselves," Hansen said. "Colorado beat the Buffs."

The Warriors settled for a field goal to make it a 17-point cushion with 4:52 left.

Moniz struggled to find rhythm with his new receivers in the first quarter but improvised nicely. He scampered for 34 yards, and Ray Polk was assessed a personal foul at the end of the play to set the Warriors up with a first down at the 14.

But a timely 12-yard sack by Doug Rippe stalled the drive and forced Hawaii to settle for a 38-yard field goal by Kenton Chun, which hit the right upright and bounced through off the crossbar for the game's first points.

Moniz finished 20-for-33 passing with one touchdown and no interceptions.

CU's Stewart finished with four catches for 98 yards and Richardson had three catches for 49 yards to highlight Hansen's inconsistent 16-for-30 night that included two touchdowns and an interception.

The Warriors, the preseason favorite to win the WAC, outgained CU 343-240 in total yardage. The Hawaii football program will join the Mountain West in 2012 with the rest of its sports teams moving to the Big West.

This was CU's first true road game to open a season since 1995 when the Buffs trounced Wisconsin 43-7 in Madison to deliver a victory for Rick Neuheisel in his debut as head coach.

That Badger beating marked the only time since 1932 that a full-time CU head coach won his first game. Brian Cabral won his first game as CU's interim head coach last season (34-14 over Iowa State).

The Buffs will lick their wounds and try to regroup for next Saturday's home opener against Cal at Folsom Field.

"We're a much better disciplined football team than what we showed today," Bieniemy said. "So what does that mean? We have to go back to the drawing board and make sure we're giving ourselves a chance."

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cu football

Bufs fall in season opener 34-17 at Hawaii

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

Posted: 09/03/2011 07:15:48 PM MDT

Updated: 09/04/2011 03:50:31 AM MDT



Colorado linebacker Patrick Mahnke sacks Hawaii quarterback Bryant Moniz during the first quarter of an NCAA college football game, Saturday, Sept. 3, 2011, in Honolulu. (FR132415 AP | Marco Garcia)

HONOLULU — Vowing to rebuild Colorado's program brick by brick, first-year coach Jon Embree instructed each of his players to bring a brick on the charter flight for Saturday night's season opener against Hawaii in Aloha Stadium.

Perhaps this week, Embree should order his players to take a bite out of them.

The Buffs' attempt to end a 17-game road losing

streak with a designated "brick game" failed because the CU offense took too long to build some momentum.

Hawaii's 34-17 victory made Embree the third consecutive permanent Colorado head coach to lose his first game, joining Dan Hawkins (19-10 to Montana State in 2006) and Gary Barnett (41-14 to Colorado State in 1999 in Denver).

A year ago, Colorado

recovered from a 10-0 halftime deficit to overwhelm Hawaii 31-13 in Boulder. CU had to dig out of an even deeper hole this time, trailing 17-0 at the break.

"Offensively we did not do a good job," Embree said. "Every time we had a good play we went out and made a mistake. We will get that corrected. I believe in this team — the whole team."

CU finished with 240 total yards, just 17 yards rushing and 223 yards passing. Hawaii finished with 343 total yards.

Embree vowed earlier in the week that the Buffs would attempt to "implement their will" on opponents this season by running the ball "down their throats." CU senior running back Rodney Stewart had some success, particularly on

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cutbacks off a sweep. But it took some pinpoint passing by senior quarterback Tyler Hansen for Colorado to climb back into the game.

Hansen connected with sophomore wide receiver Paul Richardson for a pair of second-half touchdown passes. And, after a 34-yard field goal by freshman Will Oliver, the Buffs trailed by just a touchdown and got the ball back with 13 minutes to go.

But Colorado had to punt away the possession after Hansen was sacked and Hawaii smelled blood.

The Warriors' explosive senior



Colorado quarterback Tyler Hansen stretches before the start of an NCAA college football game against Hawaii, Saturday, Sept. 3, 2011, in Honolulu. (Marco

Garcia, The Associated Press)quarterback, Bryant Moniz, hit tailback Joey Iosefa in the right flat for a game-clinching 22-yard catch-and-run touchdown with 6:17 left to clinch Hawaii's payback win.

Moniz finished 299 total yards, including 121 rushing with three touchdowns.

"Who would have thought he'd beat us with his legs," CU junior linebacker Jon Major said. "He

did what he had to do. That's the sign of a great player."

Moniz was 20-of-33 passing for 178 yards and one touchdown; he did not throw an interception but was sacked five times.

"Mo might not lead the nation in passing this week, but he might lead the nation in rushing," Hawaii coach Greg McMackin said.

Colorado looked like a different team in the second half. After taking the second-half kickoff, the Buffs needed just six plays to go 73 yards for their first score — a 15-yard touchdown pass from Hansen to Richardson, who got behind the Hawaii defense on a skinny-post pattern.

CU senior tailback Rodney Stewart set up the TD to Richardson by taking a swing pass from Hansen and racing 52 yards down the right sideline.

"We did some good things in the second half, but we've got to get better. We made too many mistakes," said Hansen, who finished 16-of-30 passing for 223 yards with one interception, but he was sacked seven times.

It didn't take long for Hawaii to reclaim the

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momentum. Hawaii's Mike Edwards took the ensuing kickoff 48 yards to set up the third touchdown keeper of the day by Moniz.

Colorado started two untested cornerbacks, true freshman Greg Henderson and senior Travis Sandersfeld, a former walk-on. Henderson became CU's first true freshman starter at corner since Victor Scott in 1980.

Trying to protect the newbies in pass coverage, CU defensive coordinator Greg Brown called a variety of blitzes in an effort to keep Moniz guessing.

At times, the strategy worked. Moniz often looked out of sync with his passes. And CU junior linebacker Doug Rippy recorded two sacks in the first half.

But there is a weakness in every defensive formation. CU's blitzes came largely from the corner, leaving the Buffs defense vulnerable to scrambles up the gut. Moniz, smart and fast, took advantage. He kept drives alive with his feet and then burned a blitz by tucking the ball under his arm and sprinted 56 yards untouched for a touchdown that put the Warriors up 10-0 with 10:39 left in the second quarter.

Playing in his first college football game, Colorado freshman punter Darragh O'Neill showed no signs of jitters, averaging 46 yards on his first two boots with only short returns. Oliver, another true freshman, did his part by making the 34-yard field goal late in the third quarter on his first career attempt.

That pulled the Buffs to within 24-17 with almost a full quarter to go, bringing Hawaii fans to the edge of their seats for the first time.

Colorado had to play much of the game without its starting offensive left tackle, sophomore David Bakhtiari, who suffered a knee injury in the first half. The extent of the injury was not announced, but Embree did not rule him out for

Saturday's game at Folsom Field against Cal.

"It affected things a lot. It affected us emotional," Richardson said of Bakhtiari's injury. "That's our leader."

Colorado and Hawaii will resume the series with another home-and-home, a 2014 game in Boulder and 2015 rematch at Aloha Stadium.

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Embree not afraid to play true freshmen

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

Posted: 09/04/2011 01:00:00 AM MDT

Updated: 09/04/2011 01:32:08 AM MDT

HONOLULU — A total of 13 true freshmen made the Colorado travel squad for Saturday's game against Hawaii, an impressive number considering first-year Buffaloes coach Jon Embree and his staff only had about two months to salvage a recruiting class after he was hired in early December.

Those among the recruiting class of 2011 making the trip were three starters: cornerback Greg Henderson, place-kicker Will Oliver and punter Darragh O'Neill.

Colorado considers O'Neill to be a true freshman although, having enrolled at CU in August 2010 as a student only, he has four years to use up four seasons of eligibility rather than five years to play four.

Joining them were true freshman reserves Juda Parker (outside linebacker), Kyle Washington (safety), John Schrock (quarterback), D.D. Goodson (returner, running back), Nelson Spruce (wide receiver), Will Harlos (safety), K.T. Tu'umalo (outside linebacker), Paulay Asiata (offensive guard), Brady Daigh (inside linebacker) and Tyler McCulloch (wide receiver).

"I'm not afraid to play freshmen," Embree has said. "I played as a true freshman (in 1983 for

Colorado) and I trusted me."

This time last fall, Daigh was playing for Mullen.

"It's exciting," Daigh said before the trip. "I've just been working as hard as I can."

A 14th Colorado true freshman was expected to be on the trip but offensive lineman Alex Lewis contracted a flulike virus last week and was left home.

CU's travel party also included 11 redshirt freshmen, including one starter: center Daniel Munyer.

Bohn pleased with turnout.

Colorado athletic director Mike Bohn, who traveled with the team, said an estimated 1,500 Buffs fans were at Saturday's game. They gathered for a CU tailgate party beforehand.

"The great thing about it is, coming out to Hawaii, coupled with the Pac-12 move, we're meeting so many very successful alumni," Bohn said.

Home opener.

Bohn said advance ticket sales for this

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weekend's 2011 home opener against California "are solid" but could be better. With upcoming promotions he expects a good turnout, he added.

The game against Cal will not count in the Pac-12 standings. The game had been previously scheduled as a nonconference game and the teams could not find suitable replacements.

Footnotes.

Colorado linebacker coach Brian Cabral, who grew up in Hawaii, picked this as his annual lava-lava game, wearing the traditional islands wrap-around garb on the sideline. . . . This marked CU's first season opener to be nationally televised since the 2004 CU vs. Colorado State game.



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colorado vs. hawaii

Bufs' "Speedy" Stewart learns from the master: his coach Eric Bieniemy

By **Tom Kensler**
The Denver Post

Posted: 09/04/2011 01:00:00 AM MDT

HONOLULU — In preparing for his debut as an offensive coordinator Saturday, Colorado legend Eric Bieniemy made senior tailback Rodney "Speedy" Stewart one of his pet projects.

Lightly recruited out of Columbus, Ohio, Stewart has carried the load for three seasons as CU's most consistent running back. But Bieniemy believes he can get more out of the 5-foot-6, 175-pounder. There's more there, in coach'speak.

Stewart was known to occasionally take a play off. It did not happen often, from what Bieniemy could decipher from watching 2010 game films. But for Bieniemy, once is too many.

During his days as a featured running back, Bieniemy always finished plays with a nonstop motor. He earned unanimous first-team

All-America honors while helping lead Colorado to the 1990 Associated Press national championship.

"I told Speedy, 'Here's what you've got to understand: The next play is by far the most important play that you'll ever have,'" Bieniemy

said. "The bottom line is, we've got to learn to not take anything for granted. When you take things for granted, now you're letting the next man down.

"What he has to understand is, with all that he has done, it comes with a great deal of responsibility."

Bieniemy's preaching seemed to strike a nerve. Stewart had a terrific August camp, taking more of a leadership role in CU's new pro-set offense that emphasizes the running game.

"I really like Speedy Stewart," Hawaii coach Greg McMackin said during preparations for the game. "He gave us trouble in the second half last year."

Bieniemy likes to say that Speedy has a chance to leave "big footprints" at Colorado. Entering the season, Stewart, with 2,744 career yards, needed to average 92 yards for the 13 regular-season games and break Bieniemy's school rushing record of 3,940. CU does not include statistics from bowl games in his all-time records.

If Stewart does become CU's all-time rusher, Bieniemy will be the first to greet him with a hug.




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"E.B. is a good coach, a real good coach," Stewart said. "He's a perfectionist. He wants us to do something the right way all the time. If you mess up, you're going to hear about it and he'll make you do it over again."

"He expects big things of me this year. I'm a senior, so he expects me to lead. That's what I'm trying to do."

In addition to learning to maintain a higher level of effort, Stewart has improved his blocking in pass protection and his route running as a receiver out of the backfield, Bieniemy said.

And of course, Bieniemy has given some tips about toting the rock.

"You never want to take away a running back's God-given ability," Bieniemy said. "The only thing I'm doing is giving Speedy a starting point, teaching him how to read (the play) and to make sure he's staying in sync and in rhythm with our offensive line."

"If he can do that, the rest is his show."

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Warriors Beat Colorado 34-17

Hawaii Starts Season With Win

POSTED: 7:26 pm HST September 3, 2011

UPDATED: 8:11 pm HST September 3, 2011

HONOLULU -- The University of Hawaii football team started the season with a win over Colorado.

The Warriors won 34-17.

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Tyler Hansen sparked life into the Buffalo offense in the third quarter. The Colorado quarterback threw two touchdowns to Paul Richardson, bringing the Buffaloes within 10 points.

Will Oliver kicked a 34-yard field goal to bring Colorado within a touchdown.

Quarterback Bryant Moniz took the Warrior offense down the field. Runningback Joey Iosefa snagged a pass from Moniz and rumbled into the end zone on a 22-yard score.

The Warrior defense stepped up the pressure on Hansen with seven sacks. UH linebacker Art Laurel picked off Hansen and scrambled just short of a touchdown.

Despite the score, the Warrior's high-flying offense did not scorch the Colorado defense. Moniz was 20-of-33 for 178 and one touchdown. It was in the running game that Moniz sparked the offense. Moniz ran the ball 12 times for 125 yards.

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Honolulu, HI (Sports Network) - Bryant Moniz ran for three scores and threw for a fourth to power the Hawaii ...

Honolulu, HI (Sports Network) - Bryant Moniz ran for three scores and threw for a fourth to power the Hawaii Warriors to a 34-17 victory over the [Colorado](#)



Buffaloes in a non-conference battle.

Moniz, known far more for his passing ability than rushing skills, racked up 121 yards on the ground for Hawaii (1-0).

Tyler Hansen threw a pair of touchdown passes to Paul Richardson for Colorado (0-1).

Hawaii dominated the first half and held a 17-0 lead at intermission. After Kenton Chun put the Warriors on the board with a 38-yard field goal in the first half, Moniz scored on runs of 56 and 14 yards in the second stanza.

Colorado finally got on the board with just over 12 minutes left in the third quarter, as Richardson hauled in a 15-yard touchdown strike from Hansen.

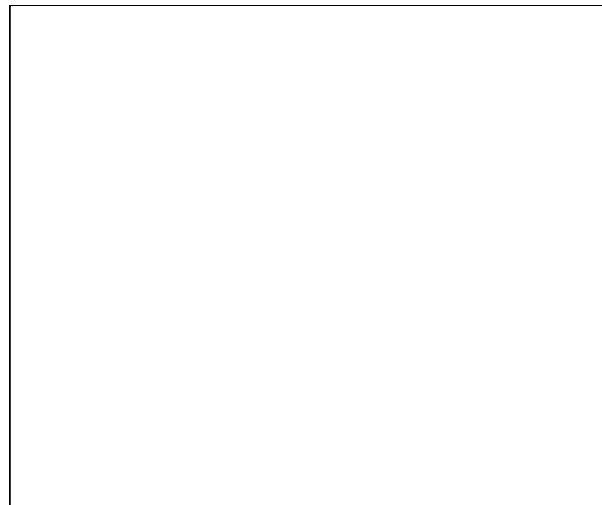
Moniz answered back for Hawaii with a one-yard touchdown run to push the Warriors' advantage to 24-7, but Colorado refused to go quietly, as Hansen and Richardson hooked up for another score, this time a 24-yard connection.

When the Buffaloes cut their deficit to 24-17 just seconds into the fourth quarter on a 34-yard field goal by Will Oliver, the game obviously got interesting. But the Warriors' defense slammed the door from that point on.

Hawaii closed out the scoring with a 22-yard touchdown pass from Moniz to Joey Iosefa and a 22-yard field goal by Tyler Hadden.

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