



COLORADO BUFFALOES

OFFICIAL ATHLETIC WEBSITE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO



Tailback Christian Powell rumbles for a short gain Saturday.

Photo Courtesy: CUBuffs.com



Brooks: MacIntyre Likes Spring's Competitive Conclusion

Release: 04/13/2013 Courtesy: B.G. Brooks, Contributing Editor

BOULDER – Colorado's first spring football game under Mike MacIntyre ended Saturday fairly close to how the Buffs' new head coach wanted – crisp, competitive and with all of his players well fed at the end of the day.

Let them eat steak.

But it took an unexpected tweak from MacIntyre in the fast-paced game's final two minutes to assure that everyone (not just the winners) dined later on the same entree.

After leading a 90-yard drive that pulled his Black team to within two points with 1:38 to play, quarterback Nick Hirschman was given the ball back at midfield – a MacIntyre decision – with a chance to direct a game-winning drive.

Hirschman complied, pushing the Black squad to the Gold 6-yard line, where Justin Castor kicked a 26-yard field goal on the game's final play to give the Black squad a 17-16 win at Folsom Field.

BUFFALO EXTRAS



Listen:

Spring Game
04/13/2013



Watch:

2013 Spring Game Highlights
04/14/2013



[Buy Season Tickets](#)



[Statistics](#)



[Spring Practice Central](#)



[Signed Ball, Helmet Auctions](#)

"I made it happen that way," MacIntyre said afterward. "The Gold team was mad at me, but I wanted to have it happen that way. They all get to eat – that's one good thing. I wanted to see everybody compete and keep fighting and that's one thing we really did . . . it was great effort on both sides."

Hirschman said his Black squad's unanticipated late takeover at midfield resulted from the coaches not wanting to risk injury with an on-sides kick attempt. "It was cool that Coach 'Mac' allowed us to take one from the 50 in and have a chance to win the game . . . I didn't know what was going on, but he said, 'Offense is back up' so we went back out there."

Said Gold quarterback Connor Wood of the Black team being offered its final chance to win: "Oh, man . . . well, we all get steaks. I think (MacIntyre) was just trying to get everyone the same meal. The loser was supposed to get hot dogs."

His late set-up aside, MacIntyre said, "Overall, I thought the effort was very good. We saw a lot of plays, saw the DBs making some plays, saw some good runs, saw the quarterbacks do some good things."

AND THEN THERE WERE TWO: The QB competition has narrowed from six at spring's beginning to two – Hirschman and Wood – as the Buffs head toward August camp. That pair, both juniors, and redshirt freshman Shane Dillon will be joined by incoming freshman Sefo Liufau, who will be given a chance to compete before a starter is named.

Hirschman completed 16-of-27 passes for 219 yards and two touchdowns Saturday, while Wood was 11-of-16 for 205 yards and one TD. Dillon's duty was fairly limited, likely giving MacIntyre and offensive coordinator/QB coach Brian Lindgren a more comprehensive look at Hirschman and Wood. Dillon completed three of six passes for 38 yards.

Lindgren said Hirschman and Wood "had their times (Saturday), but we're still not where we want to be. I think those guys are making improvements and learning the system. I think they'll tell you the same thing – we still have work to do. We missed some opportunities in the passing game, either (being) off in the throw, a dropped pass – and we have to make those plays."

More specifically on the top two QB competitors, Lindgren said he was "really pleased with the development of Connor Wood. The last three weeks of spring he did a lot of things we asked of him. He started to make decisions and was able to throw the ball with some accuracy. I don't think he's anywhere where he needs to be for the first game yet, but I was pleased with him."

Of Hirschman, Lindgren added he was impressed with Hirschman's "competitiveness and the way he handles himself on the field . . . guys respond to it. And it was nice to see him in that two-minute drive at the end, take them down, manage the clock and get us in field goal range."

Hirschman called his morning in the stadium enjoyable and productive: "I thought it went well . . . spring games are always a good time, everybody gets pumped up, great atmosphere. I love seeing guys making big plays and celebrating with them. That's why it's fun to me."

Wood came away with the higher QB rating (197.0 to Hirschman's 151.8) but said any talk of separation between the two must come from the coaching staff: "You'll have to ask coaches that – that's the best answer I can give. I think we both did well in the offense. That's all the coaches have asked us – be consistent."

But Wood did say he believes it is good for the Buffs to have a pair of leaders at the position – as well as on the team – heading into the summer. "Nick and I will be leading the charge," Wood said. "It's good to let the guys on the team know . . . it'll be good for us in the summer."

Wood also said the second half of spring drills "really showed the coaches we would compete between positions and between offense and defense. It makes it more fun. Practices go by so much faster, they don't drag. We're having fun out there and people are getting better – especially in this last week and a half it's been great."

GOING DEEP AND DEEPER STILL: Receiver Paul Richardson played in his first spring game in a couple of years and made an immediate impact stretching the field. He caught five passes for 169 yards and a

touchdown, got his hands on another Wood pass and was open but overthrown by Wood on another.

Wood thought that was impossible. "That's the first time in my life that's happened," he said. "I was trying to get it where he could get it, not the defense."

Richardson, who missed last season rehabbing a knee injury that required surgery, said he and Wood "connected for a lot of yards. I was just happy to be out here. Connor's not afraid to make those passes now, but it wouldn't happen if the line wasn't blocking."

It took two long misses before Wood and "P-Rich" got in sync with an 85-yard scoring play. MacIntyre said Richardson "kind of makes them all sync up a little bit. He's so fast and does things. It's good to see 'P-Rich' back out here. There's one (pass) he wishes he would have had back – where he could have laid out for. That's just getting used to the depth perception, the full speed, the stadium and everything else. I thought they hooked up and did some good things. And I thought the other receivers did also."

With Richardson and, among others, newcomer Jeff Thomas, MacIntyre expects the Buffs to be have more of a deep-threat presence come fall. "That's something you can count on," he said. "If (the secondary) is playing deep coverage, we have to be able to run the ball and dink it. If they come and try to stop our short game, which we hope they have to do at times, we have to go over the top."

That's fine by Richardson and the QBs. "We're a lot more comfortable now," Richardson said. "We have a lot of receivers now and we all think we can go downfield. The fact that they're giving us opportunities to go downfield and we're doing well with it . . . we're completing those passes. When we're making plays downfield, teams can't just 'man' us . . . they're going to have to play off of us a little bit and that's going to open up our running game."

Thomas, a 6-3, 195-pound freshman, finished with three catches for 52 yards – including a 33-yard scoring reception from Hirschman. "He's so incredibly fast," Hirschman said of Thomas. "He looks slow because he runs so perfect. He's big and fast when he gets moving. And he's got great hands. Once he gets the ball in his hands he's going to make plays with his feet."

LIKING THE SPRING FORMAT: Saturday's game drew a crowd of 10,244 and featured four 12-minute quarters. A running clock was employed except for the final two minutes of each half. It was all wrapped up in less than 90 minutes (1:28).

MacIntyre divided the squad as evenly as possible – and the players liked the concept.

"This was really smooth in the way it was run," Hirschman said. "Last year we really didn't have a spring game per se. I've always thought it was a lot more fun to split up the teams and go with a regular game. We did it my freshman year and I'm really happy about it."

Added linebacker Paul Vigo: "I liked it . . . it was very different from what we've had (in the past). It was more competitive, more game-like."

SPRING DEFENSIVE EVALUATION: About 25 percent of CU's defensive scheme is in and coordinator Kent Baer says the remaining 75 percent likely won't be installed by the time the Buffs open on Sept. 1 against Colorado State.

"We're not close to what we normally do," Baer said. "A lot (of the remaining 75 percent) marries into other things we do. I don't think it's that tough, but we're still a long ways away from doing a lot of things we want to do. But we've got the basics in."

Baer said defenses rarely enter a season with an entire package installed: "You never go in with the whole deal. Colorado State is certainly different (schematically) than lining up against Central Arkansas. We'll try and gradually teach those things. And there will be other things to teach when we play Fresno. Some of the stuff (to teach) is impossible right now because our offense doesn't do some of the things we'll see down the road."

And what was shown Saturday was basically vanilla because the game was televised (Pac-12 Network), "so there are a lot of things we didn't want to show," Baer said. "But I think we played pretty hard and flew

around."

What Baer and his staff sought to teach during spring drills started with effort and physical play. "I'm not going to compromise that," he said. "I understand if a guy's not athletically gifted enough to play a technique or do something was ask him to do, but I won't compromise about being physical and tough. We're trying to get that across and I think we've made progress. But we're still not where we need to be."

Areas that need to be improved in come August include "tackling, learning to play harder still and learning how to leverage the football," Baer said.

Vigo said he sees overall progress with the defense: "I'm very encouraged. I think we have more of a solid identity on defense. We have to put more emphasis on getting better at our details, but I think everything is going to fall into place."

CENTER OF ATTENTION: Senior Gus Handler is listed as No. 1 on the depth chart at center, with sophomore Brad Cotner backing him up. Junior Daniel Munyer can play center and guard, but his absence (leg) for most of spring drills prevented Lindgren and O-line coach Gary Bernardi from getting an accurate look at the center spot.

One offensive concern, Lindgren said, is at center: "We need to keep developing; we're not sure who to put there. We've had some snap trouble, one or two (Saturday). We can't have any issues as much as we're in the gun."

Lindgren said Handler, Cotner and Munyer will get August looks before a starter is settled.

Elsewhere in the O-line, Lindgren said he was impressed with Jack Harris at left tackle and with Stephane Nembot's progress at right tackle.

BUFFS' GOALS GOING FORWARD: MacIntyre's offensive goals in August and beyond are more accuracy from the QBs, better attention to detail by the offensive line and finishing and communicating at the line.

Defensively, he wants a better effort in running to the football, better understanding of gap responsibilities and daily improvement in the secondary. "We tell the DBs, you're not beat until they catch it," he said.

MacIntyre said he was pleased with his kickers, punters and long snappers.

KEEPING IT POSITIVE: With the Buffs finishing 1-11 in 2012, MacIntyre believed the last thing needed as that page was turned was negativity heaped upon negativity. There has been an abundance of positive reinforcement since his hiring. The team's psyche, he believes, is on the upswing.

"We're on the way, but not where we want to be," he said. "Every scrimmage and every practice from the first on, they've had more fun playing, congratulated each other, applauded each other, enjoyed coming out and doing the work. If you enjoy your work, you get better. If you don't enjoy it, you don't . . . as you enjoy the process you get better."

Coaching under Bill Parcells with the Dallas Cowboys, MacIntyre said Parcells "was really nice to the guys and the coaches" when the Cowboys lost. "But when we won he was all over us . . . I kind of watched and learned there; he knew what he was doing."

Wood said in the team's first meeting with MacIntyre and his staff, "They said they would encourage us and they believed in us. Over time, through spring ball, we've started to believe that. They don't get down on us. Obviously it's football and they'll yell at us – but they do it in a positive way."

BUFF BITS: Two injuries were reported Saturday – an ankle sprain to O-lineman Jeromy Irwin and a possible ACL tear to linebacker Tommy Papilion . . . Saturday's scrimmage saw only one interception, one lost fumble and a blocked punt, which MacIntyre called the product of miscommunication on special teams. "Better (Saturday) than on Sept. 1 . . . we'll keep teaching that." . . . The day's leading tackler was freshman defensive back John Walker, who missed last season with a hand injury suffered early in August camp. Walker was credited with eight unassisted tackles . . . Freshman linebacker Addison Gillam played the outside and middle

spots – the latter position after only two practices there. “I made a few mistakes, but once my nerves calmed down I started feeling better,” he said. “I’m starting to pick up on the defense more.” The 6-4 Gillam said he hopes to weight about 235 – 10 pounds heavier than now – by August camp . . . Saturday’s top rusher was Gold tailback Tony Jones (four carries, 43 yards). Black tailback Josh Ford, who had enjoyed huge spring game productivity in seasons past, gained 13 yards on eight carries . . . MacIntyre saved his 15th – and final – spring practice for Tuesday. It will feature a review/wrap-up walk-through. A spring-ending depth chart is expected to be released at week’s end. Said MacIntyre: “The pencil depth chart is now a little more in erasable pen now. So they’ve got to keep pushing.”

Contact: [**BG.Brooks@Colorado.EDU**](mailto:BG.Brooks@Colorado.EDU)

SHOW MENU



Football: CU Buffs go deep during Black's win over Gold in spring game

By Kyle Ringo Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

If the ladies really do dig the long ball, they're going to enjoy the Colorado offense in the fall.

Judging by the number of deep balls thrown in the annual spring football game Saturday at Folsom Field, there should be plenty of moments that bring fans out of their seats in 2013. Now the Buffs just need to work on completing a higher percentage of those throws before the first season of coach Mike MacIntyre's coaching tenure kicks off.

Quarterback Connor Wood showed off his arm strength multiple times leading the Gold team. And why wouldn't he? Wood had wide receiver Paul Richardson on his team. Richardson returned to the field this spring after missing last season with a torn knee ligament.

Wood actually managed to overthrow Richardson on several occasions before hitting him in stride in the third quarter for an 85-yard touchdown pass that served as the highlight of the day. But quarterback Nick Hirschman led a pair of fourth-quarter drives that gave the Black team a 17-16 win over Gold.

Place-kicker Justin Castor kicked a 26-yard field goal on the final play of the game for the victory.

"That's something you can count on," MacIntyre said of the deep passing. "Now, if they're playing really deep coverage, then we better be able to run the ball and dink it, but if they come up trying to stop our short game, which what we hope they have to do at times, we have an ability to go over the top and our quarterbacks have learned the concepts."

Running back Tony Jones started the scoring with a 30-yard touchdown run on the first possession for the Gold team. It was the longest run of the day by either team and Jones finished as the leading rusher with four carries for 43 yards and the score.

The Black team responded on its next possession with Hirschman hitting running back Christian Powell along the sideline. Powell sprinted 52 yards to the end zone.

Wood heaved a ball deep to wide receiver Paul Richardson late in the first quarter. Richardson sprinted to catch up to the pass but couldn't make the catch when he found it with outstretched hands. Later in the drive, Wood and Richardson did manage to complete a connection on a long ball, but the drive ended when wide receiver Keenan Canty fumbled after catching a pass. Canty also later muffed a punt.

"That was the first time I've ever done that in my life," Wood said smiling when asked if he was surprised about overthrowing Richardson. "I was trying to get it where only he can get it and not the defense."

Wood completed 11 of 16 passes for 205 yards and the touchdown. Hirschman completed 16 of 27 passes for 219 yards and two touchdowns. Fellow quarterbacks Shane Dillon, Stevie Joe Dorman and John Schrock had opportunities to lead drives as well.

Richardson finished his day with five catches for 169 yards and a touchdown and probably should have had at least three more catches that would have taken him over 200 receiving yards.

"We were successful together," Richardson said. "We connected on a lot of yards and I think that's going to be the base of our (offense) going down field and completing those deep passes."

Coach Mike MacIntyre decided to include live special teams plays in his first spring game to help evaluate the best players for each of those units. Wide receiver Justin Gorman, who has been the team's holder, took a step toward earning a spot on the punt return team by blocking a punt from Darragh O'Neill in the second quarter.

O'Neill kicked the ball out of the back of the end zone for a safety, giving the Gold team a 9-7 lead at halftime.

"It was great to do our special teams live," MacIntyre said. "You saw some things that were good and you saw some things you've got to work on. You don't really know that until you do it completely live and there is no one out there yelling at you, you got to step, you got to block somebody. That's great to teach off of. You'd rather it happen now than against CSU that's for sure."

The Black team almost provided a deep connection to rival the one between Wood and Richardson when Hirschman found wide receiver Jeffrey Hall at the goal line with a 50-yard bomb with 3 minutes remaining, but Hall dropped the ball.

Only 90 seconds later, Hirschman finally made a connection on a deep ball when he found true freshman wide receiver Jeff Thomas wide open for a 33-yard pass. CU fans will likely see a lot of Thomas in the fall as a tall and speedy complement to Richardson.

"It's definitely great to have a deep threat once again," Hirschman said. "Like I said before, those guys run great routes and the reason we were able to throw the ball so well down the field is because the line blocked so well this spring."

Cornerback John Walker led the Gold team with eight total tackles, all solo. Linebacker Lowell Williams led the Black team with six total stops. Safety Marques Mosley made the only interception of the scrimmage off a tipped pass by Dorman.

Follow Kyle @KyleRingo

Howell: CU Buffs must take advantage of spring optimism

By Brian Howell Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

Ohio State fans have no problem plunking down \$12 to watch the Buckeyes' football team play a glorified scrimmage in April.

Tens of thousands of Alabama fans pour into Bryant-Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa to see the Crimson Tide players battle each other each spring.

Colorado is a long way from reaching that level. Heck, even with free admission, the crowd for Saturday's spring game more closely resembled the smattering of people that stuck around Folsom Field for the brutal fourth quarters last fall.

Yet, considering the Buffs are coming off the worst season in school history, they've still got a decent core group of fans that are optimistic life will get better at CU.

"I'm a Buff fan, thick and thin," said Michelle McDowell of Arvada, who said she has been a CU fan since 1986. "I've always been positive about the Buffs."

After going 1-11 last season the Buffs need as many Michelle McDowells as they can get. On Saturday, 10,244 fans showed up to watch the Buffs, a significant jump from last year's 7,150.

Credit optimism for that.

First-year head coach Mike MacIntyre has made a great first impression on his players, but also with the fans. Even McDowell, who said she cried when former coach Jon Embree was fired in December, is on board.

"I was on the conference call with MacIntyre and I thought he has energy that's amazing," McDowell said. "He brings a lot of great things to the program. I think he's got a really good positive outlook."

CU fans, of course, will take any shred of optimism they can get. Being a Colorado fan has been difficult lately. The Buffs haven't been to a bowl game since 2007 and haven't produced a winning season since 2005.

Last year was especially brutal, as the Buffs not only lost 11 games (including 0-6 at Folsom Field), but got blown out in many of them.

"It's been rough," said Roger Comer of Commerce City, whose family has had season tickets since the 1960s. "The excitement of joining the Pac-12 and then seeing how we stacked up with the rest, that was discouraging. But, we're hoping they're going on the right path now."

Optimism is part of what brought Comer and his two young sons to Saturday's spring game, but he's been down this road before.

There was optimism in 2008, following a bowl game appearance the previous fall. A record 17,800 fans showed up to the spring game that year. The Buffs finished 5-7 in the fall.

There was optimism in 2011, as well. That was Embree's first spring and 15,655 fans showed up to the final

scrimmage. That season ended in a 3-10 record.

"I bleed black and gold, so I can't help but be optimistic," Comer said. "On the same hand, it's a pattern that we keep being optimistic and being let down, but we're nonetheless long-time supporters. I'm hoping this will be the time."

The fans who watched Saturday's spring game probably left feeling a little better about the team. Quarterbacks Connor Wood and Nick Hirschman both played well. Receiver Paul Richardson, who missed the entire 2012 season with a torn ACL, proved he is still a dynamic play-maker. Defensively, the Buffs showed a lot more fight and an ability to compete than they did last fall.

"I'm excited to see how everything is running," Chris Pascoe of Westminster said prior to the scrimmage. "I'm just ready for the new season, new coach. I'm just ready to get it going."

Michelle Lisella, whose son John will join the Buffs as a gray shirt in January, said, "Everyone's got that renewed energy."

CU's task now is to capitalize on the optimism.

The Buffs will have no problem keeping Pascoe, McDowell, Comer and many of Saturday's attendees on board.

There's really only one way to spread the passion to a wider audience, though.

"I'm a Colorado native, but I can't deny we're all big fans when teams are winning," Comer said. "I don't feel like I'm that way, but it's evident."

Follow Brian on Twitter:

@BrianHowell33.

Black team beats Gold team 17-16 in CU Buffs spring football game

By John Henderson The Denver Post The Denver Post

Posted:

DenverPost.com

BOULDER — The rest of the Pac-12 could have watched Colorado's spring football game Saturday, and if they weren't quivering in their cleats, they at least weren't laughing in their Barcaloungers as they often did a year ago.

The Buffaloes' first televised spring game produced some long-awaited positives. Junior quarterbacks Connor Wood and Nick Hirschman continued to show marked improvement, fewer tacklers went "Ole!" and only two backup players got hurt.

"We saw a lot of plays," said first-year CU coach Mike MacIntyre. "We saw the DBs making more plays, which you want to see. We saw some good runs. We saw the quarterbacks execute some good things."

The Black team beat the Gold team 17-16 in front of a crowd of 10,244. The teams were evenly divided. The Black team won on backup kicker Justin Castor's last-second, 26-yard field goal — much to the chagrin of the Gold team, which watched MacIntyre give the ball back to the Black team to make it close.

"We all get steak," said Wood, who quarterbacked the Gold team. "He told us at the beginning of the game that the winners get a steak dinner. I think he was trying to get everyone the same meal, because the loser was supposed to get hot dogs."

Wood deserved steak regardless. In a clear two-man battle at QB, Wood was 11-of-16 for 205 yards, including an 85-yard touchdown to Paul Richardson. Hirschman was 16-of-27 for 219 yards and two TDs: a 52-yard screen pass to tailback Christian Powell and a 33-yard toss to freshman Paul Thomas.

It helped Wood to have the speedy Richardson on his side, but Wood looked sharp all game except for twice overthrowing him on bombs.

"That's the first time I've ever done that (to Richardson) in my life," Wood said with a smile.

MacIntyre wouldn't show his hand on the QB race. He will wait until he evaluates the film, but it's clear the addition of Richardson and Thomas plus converted tailback D.D. Goodson has transformed the CU passing game.

"It makes a huge difference," Wood said. "When you have guys who can stretch the field, it opens up underneath stuff for intermediate throws and the running game. It makes us more of a threat."

The good and bad

OFFENSIVE POSITIVES

1. Wide receivers. Much-needed speed is on the way this fall.
2. Quarterbacks. Connor Wood and Nick Hirschman sharp and confident.
3. Jack Harris. Standout all spring camp at a new position.

OFFENSIVE MINUSES

1. Shane Dillon. QB not nearly as accurate as Wood and Hirschman.
2. Offensive line injuries. Only 10 could play in the spring game.
3. Center. CU's new pistol offense struggled with snaps all spring.

DEFENSIVE PLUSES

1. Chidera Uzo-Diribe. Senior defensive end showed star potential.
2. New linebackers. Addison Gillam and Woodson Greer emerged.
3. Kenneth Crawley. Sophomore cornerback has excelled.

DEFENSIVE MINUSES

1. Tackling. Buffs improving, but they have a long way to go here.
2. D-line conditioning. Unnamed six must lose combined 100 pounds.
3. Secondary. Coaches are trying all kinds of DB combinations.

CU Buffs' former assistants understand their nomadic existence

By John Henderson The Denver Post The Denver Post

Posted:

DenverPost.com

SUPERIOR — Greg Brown's study is a Greg Brown football museum. Framed, signed jerseys of famous players he has coached — from three Thorpe Award winners to Rodney Harrison — hang on the walls. The helmets of all 11 teams he has coached — from the old Denver Gold to the Colorado Buffaloes — paint the room with a rainbow of colors.

It's a snapshot of his life as an assistant football coach. It's a snapshot of an assistant's life in another way: Brown isn't spending any time in it these days. He's at his new job in Tuscaloosa, Ala., as Alabama's secondary coach, working at spring practice.

The den was completed in December — just after he was let go along with the rest of Jon Embree's assistants at Colorado. Now the Browns are trying to sell their house.

"The Realtor wants to put the house on the market tomorrow," Brown's wife, Stacie, said recently. "My daughter's best friends are staying here for a week while their parents are on a trip. Really? You expect me to have my house spotless with four children? You're crazy.

"I'm a little more stressed than normal."

Stress is as big a part of the lives of assistant coaches and their families as breathing. They are the nomads of sport. They bounce around the country like fumbled footballs, victims in a profession where job security is a year-to-year sweatbox. When Embree was fired, media attention focused on the head coach losing his job after just two seasons. Little attention was paid to his entire staff being let go.

Now, a little over four months later, four have landed other coaching jobs, four — Steve Marshall, Kanavis McGhee, Rip Scherer and Mike Tuiasosopo — are still looking, and one, J.D. Brookhart, has left the profession, fed up with the constant turnover.

Brown knows the drill well. Alabama is his 15th job in 31 years, which was almost par for the course on Embree's staff. Marshall has had 15 jobs in 33 years; Scherer has had 14 jobs in 38 years. Some assistant coaches' résumés look like an itinerary for a touring rock band.

"If you want to lay down roots, you don't want to be an assistant football coach," Marshall said. "Not at this level. You just can't do it. It doesn't even cross your mind."

Always migrating

Talk to assistant coaches about their rambling lifestyle and you may as well talk to a herd of gazelles. Migratory wanderings are integrated into their existence, like recruiting and blowing a whistle.

Yet, to a man, they say the effects of their profession hit one area hardest: their children.

"They know," said Brown, an Arvada High School graduate who has daughters age 12 and 10. "They equate wins and losses with moving and staying."

Hannah Brown, his 12-year-old, is in the seventh grade. This will be her seventh move. Like her father, she has learned to adapt. On a recent afternoon, she came home from school wearing a gray and crimson "Property of the University of Alabama" sweat shirt.

"I've only cried one time when we moved," she said.

That was three years ago, when her father left his second stint at Colorado, where he was the secondary coach under Dan Hawkins, for Arizona, where he was co-defensive coordinator. Brown returned in 2011 as CU's defensive coordinator to help Embree rebuild the program.

Kids are resilient, particularly older ones who are used to seeing moving vans in their driveway. The only thing Hannah knows about Alabama is it's close to her mom's family in Tennessee, and the Crimson Tide won the national title last season. Her mother is more worried about how Hannah will fit in as a vegetarian.

"You don't see many vegetarian kids in Tuscaloosa," Stacie joked.

But seriously, the sight of seeing children say goodbye to other children, repeatedly, never gets easy. The Browns will move when school gets out.

"Moving day is gut-wrenching, absolutely gut-wrenching," Stacie said. "That's when they see all their beds being broken down and everything is packed up and loaded on the truck. It's gut-wrenching for everyone involved."

Not everyone will weep for assistant coaches. Unemployment in the U.S. is 7.7 percent, and the average salary for Colorado assistants last year was about \$250,000. That can buy a lot of For Sale signs.

But few professions in society are as dependant on two simple numbers: wins and losses. If the program goes south and the head coach is fired, the new coach doesn't retain many, or any, holdover coaches. New Colorado coach Mike MacIntyre didn't retain any assistants.

It's a tribute to the staying power of Brian Cabral, who was a linebackers coach under five Colorado coaches for 27 years, that he was able to stay in Boulder so long.

"If you can't handle stress, do something else," Marshall said. "It's the nature of the business. Being an assistant football coach, you're really kind of — to use a military term — a hired gun."

Not a job for everyone

For last year's staff, the Colorado ending was not pleasant. They were handed a program with five consecutive losing seasons. After two more, athletic director Mike Bohn and Embree mulled changes to the coaching staff. During discussions, however, Bohn became convinced Embree would not be able to right the program and decided for a clean sweep.

"It's been awhile since I've had to look for a job," said Tuiasosopo, who has four children. "I came here to help a friend turn a program around. I was at Arizona for seven years. I was with Urban (Meyer) at Utah. It's kind of hard. I've never been through anything like this.

"If I knew we'd be fired after two years, I wouldn't have come here."

State law allows only six multiyear contracts in an athletic department. Offensive coordinator Eric Bieniemy had CU's lone multiyear contract for an assistant.

"We've gotten our last paycheck," said Kathy Tuiasosopo, Mike's wife. "We have health insurance issues and all those things to worry about when you don't have a job. When you move a lot, it's an expensive endeavor. We're renting a house here. It's not like we have a big, big job to set you up for a while."

All of this is why, after 18 years in the coaching game, Brookhart is getting out. The Cherry Creek High School alum and former Colorado State receiver and Akron head coach was CU's passing game coordinator. He returned to the Dallas area, where he runs the Carl J & Margo A Johnson Foundation, a charity organization.

He may help coach a high school team on the side. But major colleges? Not anymore.

"We had one move in 15 years," Brookhart said. "Now this will be four houses in five years. It's not something I want to pursue, then get let go in another three years."

The rest of the staff, meanwhile, keeps marching, or looking for work.

"That time of year when all the firings are happening — I'm not talking about our particular situation but all of my friends from all of the teams we've been with and are scattered throughout the United States — then it kind of helps me to know that we're all in this thing together," Stacie Brown said. "It's not a result at all of the coaches' abilities. It's just the nature of the business."

"It kind of is a coaches' fraternity. But it's a coaches' wives sorority, too."

John Henderson: 303-954-1299, jhenderson@denverpost.com or twitter.com/johnhendersondp

Ex-CU aides

A look at what happened to the assistant coaching staff at Colorado after Jon Embree was fired following the 2012 season:

GREG BROWN

Age: 55

CU position: Defensive coordinator

2013: Secondary coach, Alabama

Coaching trail: 15th coaching job since 1983

ERIC BIENIEMY

Age: 43

CU position: Offensive coordinator

2013: RB coach, Kansas City Chiefs

Coaching trail: Returns to NFL, was Vikings' running backs coach before returning to his alma mater in 2011

RIP SCHERER

Age: 60

CU position: Assistant head coach/quarterbacks

2013: Looking for work

Coaching trail: Has had 14 coaching stops, his first at Penn State in 1974

J.D. BROOKHART

Age: 48

CU position: Passing game coordinator; tight ends/special teams

2013: Left coaching after 18 years, now working at Carl J & Margo A Johnson Foundation, Dallas

Coaching trail: Began coaching career on Denver Broncos' staff in 1995

BRIAN CABRAL

Age: 56

CU position: Linebackers coach

2013: Associate head coach/defensive coordinator, Indiana State

Coaching trail: Former CU standout linebacker had been Buffs assistant since 1989

BOBBY KENNEDY

Age: 46

CU position: Wide receivers coach

2013: Iowa wide receivers coach

Coaching trail: Ninth coaching job since 1990

STEVE MARSHALL

Age: 56

CU position: Offensive line coach

2013: Looking for work

Coaching trail: Has had 15 coaching stops since beginning career at Plymouth State in 1979

KANAVIS MCGHEE

Age: 44

CU position: Defensive line coach

2013: Looking for work

Coaching trail: CU job was his first collegiate coaching position

MIKE TUIASOSOPO

Age: 49

CU position: Defensive line coach

2013: Looking for work

Coaching trail: Veteran assistant began coaching career at Utah State in 1996