

Football: Second round of spring practices will shine light on Buffs' roster

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Posted:

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Intrigue usually isn't a word associated much with spring football practices, but it definitely applies to Tuesday's session at Colorado, the first for the Buffs in the second half of spring drills.

First-year coach Mike MacIntyre and his assistants spent the first eight practices of spring without a depth chart. They evaluated every player on the roster splitting reps at all positions equally among the players available for practice each day.

MacIntyre intends to spend the final seven practices, including the spring game, installing more of the offense and defense and giving more practice time to the players he believes are most likely to be contributors in the fall.

Unless MacIntyre chooses to issue a depth chart prior to Tuesday's practice, fans and media members will get their first clues of who the frontrunners are to earn starting jobs by who is on the field taking the first snaps in team periods.

After the final practice before spring break, MacIntyre said he and his assistants would establish a "pencil depth chart" they would use to start the second half of spring. MacIntyre said that depth chart could and will change at times in the middle of some practices as spring winds down.

Obviously the question everyone wants to know is who has impressed coaches most at quarterback?

There are six players in the mix at the position but at least two are expected to be weeded out prior to Tuesday. Those players won't be given repetitions any more in practice and will be slotted into scout team quarterback roles for the fall if they choose to remain in the program and don't switch positions.

Colorado already has signed a seventh quarterback, Sefo Liufau, who will arrive in the summer and it is recruiting an eighth player at the position. Junior college QB Nelson Fishback of Butte College in California visited CU prior to spring break and also could join the competition in the summer.

Juniors Nick Hirschman and Connor Wood and redshirt freshman Shane Dillon are thought to be the favorites to earn the job among players already on the team, but more light will be shed on where everyone stands Tuesday.

Senior Jordan Webb started a majority of games under center for the Buffs last season and will be involved in the competition as it moves forward because he hasn't been completely healthy yet this spring and MacIntyre doesn't want to rule anyone out because of an injury.

Webb underwent two surgeries on his throwing hand in the winter and wasn't fully healed when he re-injured the hand in the first part of spring ball.

Tuesday will also bring answers at other positions such as who the new staff believes is the best running back and tight end. Who is most likely to start at wide receiver in addition to Paul Richardson? Those standing out

at defensive line, linebacker and in the secondary to this point also will be revealed.

Will it be the usual suspects, guys who played primary or backup roles last season under different coaches? Or do these coaches see things dramatically differently in some areas than former coach Jon Embree and his assistants?

There were only eight seniors on last season's team. MacIntyre is essentially judging the same roster that Embree was coaching in November.

No matter what the depth chart looks like for the offensive line at the end of spring, it's a safe bet it won't look the same once fall camp begins. Tackle Alexander Lewis hasn't participated at all this spring after undergoing shoulder surgery in the winter and guard Daniel Munyer, the most experienced lineman on the roster, suffered a broken leg two weeks ago. Both are expected to be starters next season.

MacIntyre likes his practices to be open to the media and the public. Tuesday's session might be the most heavily attended of spring, other than the spring game.

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