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TE Nick Kasa (left) and OL David Bakhtiari were the only two Buffs drafted Saturday.

Photo Courtesy: CUBuffs.com



Bakhtiari, Kasa Selected In Saturday's NFL Draft

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BOULDER – David Bakhtiari took a chance with his early departure from school, Nick Kasa arrived at what would be his best position late in his career.

On Saturday, they shared the same reward: both University of Colorado standouts were offered the chance to further their football careers in the NFL.

Bakhtiari, a 6-6, 299-pound offensive lineman, was drafted in Saturday's fourth round by the Green Bay Packers. Kasa, a 6-6, 269-pound tight end, was selected two rounds later by the Oakland Raiders.

No other CU student-athletes were selected in Rounds 3-7 Saturday, but defensive tackle Will Pericak signed a free agent contract with the Baltimore Ravens, linebacker Doug Rippy signed with the Denver Broncos, and safety Ray Polk signed with the Seattle Seahawks.

Bakhtiari, who played both tackle positions at CU before electing to forgo his senior season, was the 12th player taken in the fourth round and the 109th overall draftee. Kasa, who moved to tight end from defense eight games into the 2011 season, was the fourth player drafted in the sixth round and the 172nd overall selection.

CU's 2012 roster featured eight seniors, five of whom were either drafted or signed as free agents. Dating to

1938, at least one CU player has been selected in 65 of 76 NFL drafts, with at least two Buffs selected 59 times.

"I'm so pumped . . . it's a surprise, but sometimes the best things come in surprises," said Bakhtiari, who waited on the draft to unfold in Palm Springs, Calif., with his family and a few close friends.

Bakhtiari's surprise stemmed from the Packers not being among the five teams that he and his agent believed had the most interest in him. He said he had an interview with Green Bay at the NFL Combine, but the tradition-rich organization didn't follow up by working him out.

Also, Bakhtiari, a second-team All-Pac-12 Conference honoree in each of the past two seasons, believed he would be taken late in the second round or early in the third. "But falling to the fourth round, really, I couldn't be happier getting with this organization," he said.

"I grew up knowing the Packers – Lombardi, the 'Lambeau Leap' and just everything about them. I'm really a Niners fan, and now we get to play them in week one. It couldn't be any better."

Several draft analysts project Bakhtiari eventually will move inside at some point during his pro career. If it happens in Green Bay, that's fine with him – but that discussion hasn't taken place yet.

"We haven't talked about any of that yet . . . all five (O-line) positions are up for debate," he said, adding that neither has he briefed himself on the Packers' offensive line personnel. "I think I've got plenty of time to get to know them."

If the call from the Pack stunned Bakhtiari, the Raiders reaching out to Kasa might have been a little more expected. "I knew I was on their watch list," said Kasa, who was at his family's home in Thornton when the call came. "I had met their staff at the Senior Bowl and just loved them."

Kasa's development at his relatively new position proved to be one of the brighter spots in CU's 2012 season. Despite it being his first full-time season at tight end, he was an honorable mention All-Pac-12 selection after leading the Buffs in yards per catch (15.6). His 25 passes for 391 yards (three touchdowns) was fourth on the team and third in total yards.

Kasa's size and speed opened eyes in the Pac-12 and apparently did so among the Raiders' scouts. In addition, said Kasa, "I think they saw my work ethic and my athleticism. They know I'm a more complete tight end than most people thought; they saw my progress from the (2012) season to the Senior Bowl and saw I was making strides in the pass game and the run game.

"But mostly, I think they saw that I'm excited to play football. This is all so awesome, but I'm glad it's over and I can concentrate on playing football again."

Although he'll be concentrating on making the Raiders roster, Kasa has enough California connections to stay in touch – when time permits. A brother (Sean) is attending California Institute of The Arts in Valencia, and a cousin lives in San Francisco.

Kasa has played all of his football in Colorado – he attended Legacy High School – and during that time it was hard to ignore the Broncos. But he never went so far as becoming a "Raider Hater."

"No, that wasn't the case," he said. "I actually grew up more of an Eagles fan because I've got cousins in Pennsylvania . . . I've been all over the place (as a fan)."

Pericak (6-4, 300) said the Ravens flew him to Baltimore in March and were "upfront and honest with me . . . they're really on top of their game; they know what they're doing."

Pericak said a meeting with the coaching staff gave him the impression "that they wanted me there. They said they would have drafted me if things had worked out, but this is just as good."

Pericak will be reunited in Baltimore with former CU corner Jimmy Smith, who was a first-round draftee of the Ravens two years ago.

Rippy (6-2, 240) said he was excited to be returning to Colorado from his native Ohio. "It's crazy," he said. "I talked to some other teams throughout the process . . . I think they know what I can do, and this is a good opportunity for me."

Rippy's CU career was hampered by knee injuries, which he believes kept him from being drafted. "I just need to get back out there and show what I'm capable of doing," he said.

Linebacker Jon Major (6-2, 235) has been invited to the Chicago Bears' minicamp on a trial basis. If Major shows well, he could be offered a free agent contract.

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CU Buffs' David Bakhtiari, Nick Kasa selected in NFL draft

By Kyle Ringo Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

Two former Colorado football players saw their dreams of being drafted by an NFL team realized Saturday and four others agreed to sign with teams as free agents.

Leaving the University of Colorado early to enter the draft turned out to be well worth it for David Bakhtiari. The same is true of Nick Kasa's decision 18 months ago to switch positions from defensive line to tight end.

Bakhtiari, the Buffs' starting left tackle the past two years, decided in January to forgo his final season of eligibility and not to endure the second coaching change of his career. It paid off when he was selected in the fourth round by Green Bay with the 109th overall pick.

Kasa had to wait a little longer but he was rewarded by the Oakland Raiders. The organization picked Kasa in the sixth round with the 172nd overall selection despite the fact he had played only one season as a tight end.

Later in the evening, linebacker Doug Rippey used his Twitter account to announce he planned to sign with the Denver Broncos, bringing him back to Colorado after he returned home to Ohio following his senior season last fall.

Defensive lineman Will Pericak, who grew up in Boulder and attended Boulder High School, agreed to a free agent deal with the Super Bowl champion Baltimore Ravens. Pericak will be reunited in Baltimore with former teammate Jimmy Smith, a cornerback who was the Ravens' first-round pick two years ago.

Safety Ray Polk signed as a free agent with the Seattle Seahawks, according to his agent Peter Schaffer who also represents Pericak.

While Bakhtiari was always confident he would be picked, he was overwhelmed when it actually happened. He said Green Bay wasn't one of the top five teams he and his agent, Mark Humenik, had identified as the most likely to take him.

"Shocked, surprised," Bakhtiari said of getting the call. "I was in complete disbelief. I was so happy. I have like no emotions because my body doesn't know which one to use right now."

Bakhtiari joins former Buffs Mason Crosby and Brad Jones on the Green Bay roster. He is the seventh Colorado player to forfeit remaining college eligibility to turn pro. All seven were drafted.

He is the second member of his family to reach the NFL. His oldest brother, Eric, is a journeyman linebacker who has been on the rosters of numerous franchises, most recently with the San Francisco 49ers last season.

Bakhtiari said he doesn't know if the Packers plan to use him as a tackle or guard and he doesn't really care. He is thrilled with the opportunity to block for quarterback Aaron Rodgers.

"I am so happy I am going to an awesome organization, the top organization in the league, with some of the best players and the best quarterback in the league," he said. "I get to go be a part of this organization. The fans are great. There is so much history there and I get to be a part of that. It just gives me chills thinking about

that and the fact they want me to help them win a Super Bowl. Unbelievable."

Bakhtiari was named second-team All-Pac-12 the past two seasons with the Buffs despite playing for a team that struggled badly and went just 4-21 in that span. He was a team captain last fall.

While Bakhtiari spent his college career at tackle, he could move inside to guard as a pro because he is only 6-foot-4 and has a relatively short wingspan for an NFL tackle. Bakhtiari also played right tackle in 2010, starting 11 games that season and playing in all 12 games.

He said he did not discuss with Green Bay officials where they see him fitting in initially.

He was the highest rated Buff in this draft and is the 264th player from CU to be drafted into the NFL. Kasa is the 265th and the first tight end from CU to be selected since 2006.

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Football: Raiders draft Legacy grad Nick Kasa; Boulder's Will Pericak signs with Ravens

By Kyle Ringo [Buffzone.com](#) [BoCoPreps](#)

Posted:

[BroomfieldEnterprise.com](#)

It was just 18 months ago that Nick Kasa was a frustrated defensive lineman struggling to earn playing time in his junior season at Colorado.

On Saturday, he was drafted into the NFL by the Oakland Raiders after just one year playing tight end. The Raiders picked Kasa, a Legacy High School grad, in the sixth round with the 172nd overall selection.

Kasa was the second former CU player chosen in this year's draft. Former tackle David Bakhtiari was selected earlier in the day in the fourth round by the Green Bay Packers.

Kasa is the first CU tight end to be drafted since both Joe Klopfenstein and Quinn Sypniewski were picked in the 2006 draft. He caught 25 passes for 391 yards and three touchdowns as a senior.

Kasa isn't the only area prep product who is going to get a shot in the NFL. Colorado Buffaloes teammate Will Pericak signed a free agent contract with the Baltimore Ravens shortly after the draft's completion.

Pericak, a former Boulder High standout, was a contributor on the defensive line all four years for the Buffs. He was fourth on the team in tackles as a senior and added two sacks.

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Colorado's Bakhtiari to Packers, Kasa to Raiders, CSU-Pueblo's Jensen picked by Ravens

The Denver Post The Denver Post

Posted:

DenverPost.com

Former Colorado Buffaloes left tackle David Bakhtiari became the first player with ties to the state of Colorado to be drafted Saturday when Green Bay made Bakhtiari the 12th pick of the fourth round, No. 109 overall.

Bakhtiari, 6-foot-4 and 299 pounds, was a three-year starter for the Buffs and gave up his final year of college eligibility to declare for the NFL draft.

Being picked by the Packers came as a surprise, Bakhtiari said. But it's a pleasant surprise.

"Honestly, Green Bay wasn't in the top five of the teams I suspected," Bakhtiari said. "But I'm so happy to be going to a team like that. It's one of the top teams, one of the top organizations. I get to play with some of the best."

Later on Saturday, Bakhtiari's former teammate with the Buffs, tight end Nick Kasa, was taken by the Oakland Raiders with the fourth pick of the sixth round, No. 172 overall.

Then, with the 35th pick of the sixth round (203 overall), the Super Bowl champion Ravens made offensive lineman Ryan Jensen the first Colorado State-Pueblo player to be drafted since the school (formerly University of Southern Colorado) resurrected its football program for the 2007 season.

Jensen, 6-3 and 317 pounds, played high school football at Fort Morgan. He was lightly recruited, but became a four-year starter at tackle for CSU-Pueblo. He likely will be an NFL guard.

The Ravens were among six NFL teams that invited Jensen to make a visit.

"They were very interested in me," Jensen said. "When I went out there (to Baltimore), I really got a good vibe from them. It's quite an honor to know I will be part of that organization."

Kasa played high school football at Legacy in Broomfield, where he earned a four-star recruiting rating as a defensive end and picked CU over Florida.

Bakhtiari, a native Californian, started at right tackle as a freshman, then as a sophomore and junior at Colorado, he replaced Nate Solder at left tackle. Lacking the preferable size for a tackle, Bakhtiari might become a guard with the Packers.

"I feel like I can play tackle (at the NFL level)," Bakhtiari said. "But it's whatever the organization wants. I'm all about the team."

Bakhtiari said he looks forward to protecting Aaron Rodgers, the Packers' all-pro quarterback.

"He's a competitor, he's a winner, he's the best quarterback in the league," Bakhtiari said. "I'm going to have to watch my tail and protect that \$110 million investment."

Growing up in Fort Morgan, of course Jensen was a Broncos fan. And he acknowledged having rooted like heck against Baltimore in the playoff game in January won by the Ravens at Sports Authority Field at Mile High.

"It's pretty surreal now being a Raven," he said Saturday.

With two tackles comes competition for Packers

By [Gary D'Amato](#) of the Journal Sentinel
April 27, 2013

Green Bay - Just because the Green Bay Packers took a pair of tackles in the fourth round of the NFL draft Saturday doesn't mean starter Marshall Newhouse won't retain his starting job on the left side in 2013.

What it does mean is that he will have plenty of competition.

The Packers selected David Bakhtiari of Colorado with the 109th overall pick and Joseph Carl "J.C." Tretter of Cornell with the 122nd pick, ensuring they'll have options beyond the possible move of Bryan Bulaga from right to left tackle.

"If I'm in that (offensive line) room, let's be honest, you've got two fourth-round picks back-to-back," said offensive line coach James Campen. "Certainly, the competition barometer went up a heck of a lot. So that's a good thing to have.

"And the men that are already in that room understand that, and they understood that before this draft, certainly.

"Our competition just got better."

At Colorado, Bakhtiari (6 foot 4½, 301 pounds) started 33 games - 22 at left tackle and 11 at right tackle. He ran the 40-yard dash in 5.09 seconds and bench-pressed 225 pounds 28 times. He has 34-inch arms, an 81¾-inch wingspan and 9½-inch hands.

"I feel I can play left tackle," Bakhtiari said. "I've shown it in college, but wherever the Packers want me to play is what I'm going to play.

"They're going to give me a playbook; they're going to let me know the position, and I'm going to study it and try and become the best player I can."

Tretter (6-3½, 307) is an intriguing prospect. He was a quarterback in high school in Akron, N.Y., and started out at Cornell as a tight end before moving to tackle before his junior year.

He tested well, running the 40 in 5.09 seconds and benching 225 pounds 29 times. Tretter has 32¼-inch arms, a 78 1/8-inch wingspan and 10 1/8-inch hands

He admitted he will have to adjust to the speed of the NFL after being in the Ivy League.

"Obviously, the lower level of competition, some people worry about that," he said. "I think I've got all the tools to make the next step, and I think that showed at the combine. When you're as fast and as strong as everybody

else, I don't see much reason why you wouldn't be able to compete with everybody else."

Packers coach Mike McCarthy said Bulaga, who suffered a season-ending hip injury Nov. 4 against Arizona, has been at the Packers' facility throughout the off-season and "looks great."

He also said tackle Derek Sherrod, who missed the entire 2012 season while rehabilitating a broken leg, was making progress.

"I'm really counting on him to be a factor," McCarthy said.

Adding Bakhtiari and Tretter to the mix - which also includes Don Barclay, who started the last six games (including playoffs) at right tackle - creates a lot of competition.

"I'd really like to get these young guys in here and see how they fit," McCarthy said.

Bakhtiari said he wasn't surprised that the Packers drafted Tretter just 13 picks after he went at No. 109.

"No," he said. "I mean, that's what they need. The more competition, the better. I think it's awesome. I'll have another rookie with me when I get up there."

Campanella said Bakhtiari and Tretter were versatile enough to play multiple positions.

"(Bakhtiari) certainly is athletic enough to do so. As you know, he played left tackle. . . . But I think he's very versatile. We'll be excited to get him in here and see where we're going to place him.

"(Tretter) is very much like David in the fact that we feel like he can play multiple positions."

Bakhtiari, a native of Burlingame, Calif., counts Jordan Rodgers among his friends and met Aaron Rodgers once, "but I wouldn't say we hung out." Through the pre-draft process he worked out with Clay Matthews, who is friends with his older brother.

"He's fun, a competitor, and his work ethic is unparalleled," Bakhtiari said. "It's awesome to be working out with that kind of guy. I'm just excited now to compete against him and learn what he does because, shoot, if I can learn from him and block him, I feel like I can pretty much block anyone."

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