

Ex-Buff Tolan rallies to win Open

By Gary Baines For the Camera Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

DENVER -- Sometimes the life of a mini-tour golfer can become a grind. Traveling tournament to tournament, players often are left trying to eke out a living while keeping their dreams alive of competing on the PGA or LPGA Tour.

While they hope for their big break, smaller breaks along the way can work wonders in reinvigorating their spirits.

Such was the case Sunday when former University of Colorado golfer Derek Tolan won the Health One Colorado Open for the second time in four years.

"I'm pretty excited about it -- maybe a little more excited than I was last time in all honesty," the 26-year-old from Highlands Ranch said. "I needed something like this to kind of keep me going. I've been playing well, but I haven't really been doing anything with it. Winning, especially in a tournament I care so much about, means a lot.... I was just feeling like I needed something big to happen."

On Sunday at Green Valley Ranch Golf Club, that "something" was Tolan beating the odds by rallying from a five-stroke deficit to win the Colorado Open by a shot. In fact, he trailed by four with six holes left and still completed the comeback.

Tolan birdied three of his last six holes and shot a bogey-free 6-under-par 65 Sunday to overcome third-round leader Zahkai Brown of Arvada. With a 5-foot birdie putt on the final hole, Tolan finished with a 14-under-par 270 total, which was good for a \$23,000 pay-day.

Brown, a rookie professional and former Colorado State University golfer, three-putted from 40 feet to bogey the 17th hole and fall out of the lead for good. And when he failed to hole a pitch shot for eagle on the 18th, the victory was Tolan's.

"You've got to keep playing well if you want to win, and I just didn't play as well as I had been the first three rounds," said Brown, who tied the course record with a 63 on Saturday.

Brown posted an even-par 71 in the final round to finish at 271. James Drew of Las Vegas and Dustin Pimm of Sandy, Utah, tied for third at 273. Michael Baird, a teammate of Tolan's at CU, shared fifth place at 274. Despite a double bogey on the last hole, Baird matched Tolan's 65 on Sunday.

Former CU golfers have won eight of the last 24 Colorado opens and four of the last six, but Tolan becomes the first ex-Buff to claim the title twice. Overall, he's the sixth player to win the Open at least twice, joining Bill Bisdorf, Dave Hill, Jim Blair, Bill Loeffler and Brian Guetz.

But the most important thing, from Tolan's perspective, is that he recorded his biggest victory since the 2009 Colorado Open.

"I've been doing some good stuff, but nothing kind of breakthrough-ish or something I was really, really happy about," he said. "This actually makes me feel pretty good."

Colorado Open

1. Derek Tolan, Highlands Ranch, 67-67-71-65 -- 270, 2. Zahkai Brown, Arvada, 67-70-63-71 -- 271, 3. James Drew, Las Vegas, 70-71-65-67 -- 273, 3. Dustin Pimm, Sandy, Utah, 66-70-69-68 -- 273

Anthony Perkins accepts a local call from Broncos to help at safety

By Lindsay H. Jones *The Denver Post* *The Denver Post*

Posted:

DenverPost.com

Anthony Perkins spent all summer waiting for a phone call from the Broncos — or any other NFL team, for that matter. When his phone finally did ring Saturday, he couldn't have been in a better place to answer.

Perkins, a safety from the University of Colorado, was already planning to spend Saturday at Dove Valley. He was on his way from Boulder to Broncos headquarters in Arapahoe County, and was on Interstate 25 when he answered the call from Champ Kelly, the team's assistant director of player personnel.

Kelly wanted to know where Perkins was and if he had stayed in shape.

"I told him, 'Hey, I'll be there in 15 minutes,' " Perkins said.

When Perkins arrived, he signed a contract and stayed to watch practice with his buddies, who then left without him. His wife packed him a bag and brought it to him later at the Broncos' team hotel.

"It was definitely a crazy experience," Perkins said.

Perkins attended Community Christian High School in Northglenn. Because the school didn't have football, he played for Northglenn High before spending five years at CU, including a redshirt season in 2007.

He made nine starts as a senior for the Buffaloes last year and recovered from an ankle injury in time to play in their season finale, a victory over Utah. In that game, Perkins made a career-high 19 tackles.

Perkins went undrafted and had a tryout with the Broncos during their rookie minicamp in May. He said it was a little disappointing not to get signed then, but added that he tried to remain optimistic a call would come.

"I got good feedback from the organization," Perkins said. "They didn't sign me, but they said they liked what I was able to do. Their message to me was to just stay in shape and stay ready and you never know what happens."

The Broncos cut two undrafted rookies last week after those players failed physicals, leaving vacancies on the team's 90-man training camp roster. Also, second-year safety Quinton Carter suffered a hamstring injury.

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Photo Courtesy: NBA Photos



Six Former Buffs Make Headlines In NBA Summer Leagues

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LAS VEGAS, Nev. & ORLANDO, Fla. – The University of Colorado had six former players play in the two NBA summer leagues throughout the month of July. Other than having played at CU, they all went into their respective summer leagues with vastly different paths but similar goals.

The six former Buffs made headlines throughout the summer leagues with perhaps the top breakout story, a compelling comeback attempt and the worst injury sustained during the leagues. Two young Buffs also helped the worst team in the league to a 4-1 record while another one was the league's second-leading scorer.

Carlton Brown, Alec Burks, Chris Copeland, David Harrison, Cory Higgins and **Xavier Silas** run the gamut of how they came to be where they were in July after leaving Boulder anywhere from eight weeks ago to eight years ago. All are hoping for the same outcome, however, that of an NBA roster spot for the 2012-13 season.

Brown is an NBA rookie, the only one in a summer league fresh off his senior season in Boulder in which he led the Buffaloes to the Pac-12 Championship and NCAA Tournament third round after a magical run in March. He joined Higgins playing for the Charlotte Bobcats, who had the NBA's worst record last year, helping them to an impressive 4-1 record.

Both had very similar numbers, with Brown averaging 9.2 points, 3.0 rebounds and 1.4 assists per game and Higgins, the second-year player looking to stick to a roster next year, averaging 9.8 points, 3.0 rebounds and 1.8

assists per game.

Both players also went for double figures in three of the five games and both players scoring high was 15 points. Brown had his best game against the Denver Nuggets with his 15 points coming off of a 6-of-10 shooting performance and he added two assists. Higgins saved his best for last with a 15-point outing against Memphis in the finale.

Burks, the former lottery pick the Jazz put in the summer league to continue to develop, did just that, averaging 17.2 points, 3.4 rebounds and 2.0 assist as the Jazz went 3-2 in the Orlando league. He was the second leading scorer of the Orlando league and his best outing was a 31 point performance, when he shot 10-of-14 from the field and 10-of-11 from the line in an 84-80 win over the 76ers. He also had 22 points, seven boards and five assists in an 87-81 win over Indiana.

Copeland was perhaps the best the breakout story of either summer league, as the former Buff who has spent the few seasons in Europe, averaged 13.8 points, 4.0 rebounds and 1.0 block per game for the New York Knicks. Copeland went for double figures in each of the final four games, including 17-point outings against both Phoenix and Toronto. He was also solid against the Denver Nuggets when had 15 points and seven rebounds.

NBCSports.com's Scott Schroeder gave high praise to Copeland, stating that he "wasn't on the radar of hardly any American basketball fans ... but he looked like a hidden gem in Vegas."

From hidden gem to last chance, a name CU fans may not have heard the last few years resurfaced in Las Vegas as Harrison showed up on the Dallas Mavericks roster. Harrison did play last year in the D-League after a few years in China, where he went after the conclusion of the 2008 season and a four-year NBA career riddled with black-eye events.

Harrison did well in China, eventually winning a championship with the Guangdong Southern Tigers. He was featured along with two other "last chance" players, Adam Morrison and Hilton Armstrong, in a nice article on Grandland.com (<http://sh2.sh/Nc4URO>) that came out Friday.

By far the scariest moment of the summer league was that of Silas, who had to undergo surgery after an elbow from teammate Solo Jones not only gave him a concussion, but fractured his sinus in several places. The injury happened in the final game for Philadelphia on July 13 (Friday) and he had surgery the following day. He went to block a shot and after being hit by Jones, he fell into a row of chairs courtside.

Silas tweeted on July 22, "A week after they pulled my face off and I'm feeling great." And then again on July 25, he thanked his doctors with a photo post on twitter and said he is cleared for unlimited cardio.

He averaged 7.8 points, 3.2 rebounds and 2.0 assists per game, scoring in double figures in each of the first three games, including 12 points, four rebounds and three assists in a win over Brooklyn in the Orlando league.

Silas played for the Buffaloes for two seasons before following former CU coach Ricardo Patton to Northern Illinois. There as a senior he averaged 22.3 points, the sixth best mark in the nation in 2010-11. He went undrafted but was immediately signed by the Sixers and spent some time in France last season. He played in four games, including two against the Boston Celtics in the Eastern Conference Semifinals.

In his only two regular season games, accompanying the team on a road trip to Milwaukee and Detroit, where he scored five points in his NBA debut against the Bucks and followed that up with six points the following night against the Pistons.

NBA teams will open camp in September with preseason games starting the first week of October. The regular season will get underway Oct. 30 with a game between the Miami Heat and Boston Celtics.

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Cowboys Corner

July 30, 2012

Vickers embraces buzz of first day at Cowboys' camp, loves the 'red carpet treatment'

Cowboys officials announced a crowd of 5,266 for Monday's opening workout, with many of them dressing in team jerseys and shouting players' names as they arrived and departed from the practice field.

The scene resonated with fullback Lawrence Vickers, who signed a free-agent deal with the Cowboys in March after spending his first six NFL seasons in Cleveland (2006-10) and Houston (2011).

"It is different," Vickers said, summing up his first training camp workout with the Cowboys. "Being in Dallas is like getting the red carpet treatment. It's almost like being in Hollywood. Everywhere else, it's a little slow. But when you come to Dallas, it's different ... "It's a personal record for Day One for me (in terms of training camp attendance)."

Vickers said Monday's scene was part of the reason he signed with Dallas. Even if it meant some unexpected challenges.

"I went out yesterday to get sushi and there was people around everywhere. And I tried to get a hotel for some family and it's all sold out," Vickers said. "So I kind of understood what it would be like before I came here. And it's great. It's not a distraction. Actually, it's telling you that you're a part of something great. And if you want to be a part of this, you've got to be great."

A standout blocker, Vickers (6-foot, 250 pounds) is expected to be an integral part in helping to improve the team's ground game this season.

— Jimmy Burch

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