



COLORADO BUFFALOES

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New CU coach Mike MacIntyre has spring practice plan in place.

Photo Courtesy: CUBuffs.com



Brooks: MacIntyre Ready To Launch First CU Spring

Release: 03/05/2013 Courtesy: B.G. Brooks, Contributing Editor

BOULDER - In the very near future, a sign will go up in Colorado's Dal Ward Athletics Center reading: *"Knowledge = Confidence = Playing Fast."*

New CU football coach Mike MacIntyre will borrow that philosophy from his former boss in Dallas - highly successful NFL coach Bill Parcells - and it will be immediately applicable to how MacIntyre and his staff conduct spring practice.

But learning to play fast will come at a slower pace in MacIntyre's first spring at CU.

Spring drills open Thursday for the Buffaloes, with the spring game set for Saturday, April 13 (10:30 a.m., Folsom Field, Pac-12 Network). MacIntyre will hold one of the 15 NCAA-mandated spring workouts for a post-spring game review, with that set now for Tuesday, April 16. Eight practices will be conducted before spring break (March 23-31) and seven after.

The first eight practices, noted MacIntyre at a pre-spring media briefing on Tuesday, "will be truly evaluating

BUFFALO EXTRAS



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Colorado Spring Quick Facts (updated 3/06 with schedule and other changes)

and working and getting the culture of what we want in practice." Concepts of his offense and defense will be introduced, but "we won't put our whole offense in, we won't put our whole defense in."

That's because he wants the fundamentals of his system on both sides of the ball absorbed and his players not bogged down by too much information. He hopes that in time - and it probably won't happen after 15 practices - Parcells' message of *Knowledge = Confidence = Playing Fast* will take hold.

"We want to do a few things and let the kids play so we can evaluate," he said. "We want to see toughness and everything else that goes along with football."

In an 18-month period that began after his hiring and ends before CU opens against Colorado State (Aug. 31, Denver), MacIntyre's goal is for the Buffs to have undergone wholesale physical changes.

"We've got some guys who look good right now, we've got other guys who've got to get a little bigger and stronger, we've got guys who have to lose weight and look more fit," he said. "I want us to walk out there looking like a well-fit football team. We're in the process of doing that. I think we've got a lot of kids who are close to that, but I want all of us to do that."

MacIntyre conceded he had "no idea" about the talent he inherits from former coach Jon Embree, whose 2012 team finished 1-11. MacIntyre and his assistants have studied game tape and tape "cut ups" of individual players, but those don't always reveal players' tendencies and traits.

"Film doesn't lie," said MacIntyre, "but film doesn't tell all the truth . . . I'll tell you (about returning talent) when I get on the field and see them in person. I've always been that way, I've always done it that way."

That makes the Buffs' Spring '13 a wide-open audition at every position, with no pre-spring depth chart and no biases at any spot. Since MacIntyre didn't retain any of Embree's on-field assistants, all slates are clean.

If any initial favoritism is shown in who lines up where, it will be because of seniority. But that will last only until MacIntyre and his staff draw a bead during the first eight practices on who should be playing and where. MacIntyre said position switches could occur "daily" after the Buffs get in pads on Day 3. "It won't be quite as smooth with all that adjusting," he said, adding that a depth chart should be formulated when the players return from spring break.

If his most thorough evaluation of the Buffs must wait until he sees them on the field, MacIntyre already has come to the conclusion that defensively, "I thought we needed more overall team speed . . . that's why we signed fast, athletic linebackers. Basically, we play eight spread football teams (in 2013) that plays with five little guys on the field - four receivers and a running back, all of them quick little guys who can play in space. And the quarterback usually is a runner."

That position at CU will draw a typically huge amount of spring interest. It will open as a six-man race for the first eight days, with that number scheduled to be trimmed by half when the players return from spring break. MacIntyre said he has seen "a little bit" of high school and practice tape of redshirt freshman Shane Dillon. "He was pretty athletic and looked athletic running our (off-season) agility drills. He'll get a shot to show what he can do."

But the other five will, too, as well as incoming freshman Sefo Liufau in August. With no true incumbent at the position, "It's truly an open door," MacIntyre said, adding the best-case scenario would have at least two QBs step up. "In today's world, that's what you have to have . . . it's probably more important in today's world (because of injuries) than in the past."

MacIntyre's spring goals are for his players to stay healthy through 15 practices, emerge on April 16 with the makings of a two-deep roster and know where his incoming freshmen will have to fit in, and build bonding and a team culture - with that being of primary importance.

He said he believes the players "have bought into what we're asking them to do and seem to be excited about it." Early on, he initiated a bonding/team-building exercise by breaking down the squad into nine groups composed of 12 players each. "That's gone well," he said.

BUFF BITS: MacIntyre said the Buffs will do "quite a bit" of special teams work this spring. "There might be a back-up receiver who is our best special teams player ... I've got to see him to drills and do special teams live - kickoffs and run down on punts." He said every practice would feature about 25 minutes of special teams work. . . Junior offensive lineman Daniel Munyer has played guard and center, and says he will play for the new staff wherever he's needed. Guard, however, is where he "feels I'm best now." ... Junior receiver Paul Richardson, said MacIntyre, is "coming along slowly, getting there ... to me, he's looked good and is excited about being there." Richardson missed last season with a knee injury ... MacIntyre is scheduled to meet with head athletic trainer Miguel Rueda on Wednesday for a briefing on which players might be physically limited for spring drills. Four already have been listed as out - tailback Terrence Crowder (knee), receiver Colin Johnson (knee), offensive lineman Alex Lewis (shoulder) and defensive lineman Juda Parker (shoulder) ... Munyer said MacIntyre had introduced a "different culture" that featured "more accountability." He also said his former O-line coach, Steve Marshall, and new position coach, Gary Bernardi, were close friends. "They're kind of like the same people." ... Munyer called left tackle David Bakhtiari's early declaration for the NFL Draft "a big blow" to the O-line. "Someone has to step up (but) we're going to miss him." ... MacIntyre's practices will be open, but that's subject to change. He doesn't want any information "tweeted" from practice, posted on websites afterward, or any cell phone video shot during practices. He said there would be occasions during the season when practices would be closed.

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SHOW MENU



Football: Special teams improvements 'critical' for MacIntyre's Buffs

By Kyle Ringo Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

Colorado football coach Mike MacIntyre said he plans to spend about 25 minutes of each spring practice working on special teams, and he finally has a special teams coach in place to lead that portion of practice.

MacIntyre hired Toby Neinas as special teams coach weeks ago but the school never issued a news release and still hadn't included Neinas on the list of coaches on its website as of Tuesday afternoon.

Neinas is the son of Chuck Neinas, the former interim commissioner of the Big 12 Conference who has operated his own consulting business for years, helping colleges identify candidates and hire football coaches and athletic directors. Neinas has consulted for CU several times when it has had openings.

Toby Neinas coached at Montana State last season and previously coached at New Mexico, San Diego State, Temple and Alabama-Birmingham.

MacIntyre said the Buffs probably won't spend 25 minutes every day working on punts, kickoffs and field goals, but on days they do less kicking they will still do drills that teach players techniques used on special teams.

"I think that is absolutely critical," MacIntyre said.

Weight room work will continue

MacIntyre said he decided to dedicate six weeks to conducting 15 spring practices, in part, because it will allow the Buffs to continue hard lifting in the weight room three days a week.

"We want these kids within an 18-month period to completely change their bodies," MacIntyre said.

MacIntyre noted that each individual has areas in which the strength program is designed to help them improve and reach the 18th-month goal. As far as team goals, MacIntyre said he hopes to improve the overall team speed at CU, especially on the defensive side of the ball. That will likely come through recruiting more than the strength program.

"That is why we signed fast, athletic linebackers," he added. "They might not be the biggest guys in the world but they are fast and athletic. We basically play eight spread football teams next year that are hurry up, fast paced teams."

Notable

CU listed only four players as out for spring practices because of injuries Monday. They are running back Terrence Crowder (knee), wide receiver Colin Johnson (knee), offensive lineman Alexander Leiws (shoulder) and defensive lineman Juda Parker (shoulder). MacIntyre expects to get an updated injury report from team athletic trainers Wednesday. ... Wide receiver Paul Richardson said he is expecting to participate fully in practices after sitting out last season while recovering from a torn knee ligament suffered last spring.

Football: CU Buffs will take things slow in first spring practice under Mike MacIntyre

By Kyle Ringo Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

The plan for spring football practices at Colorado is to take things slow and teach players to do everything the right way. Offensive and defensive schemes will be installed gradually to avoid overwhelming a roster full of players who have been beaten down by losing in recent years.

First-year coach Mike MacIntyre met with reporters today at the Dal Ward Center to discuss his plans for spring ball, which begins Thursday afternoon at 3:30 and continues into mid-April. The spring game is scheduled for 10:30 a.m. Saturday, April 13, (Pac-12 Network) but there will be one practice that occurs after the spring game.

MacIntyre said he is keeping it simple – at least initially – to allow players to play fast without having to think much. He believes doing so will allow coaches to best evaluate each player's individual ability.

“You don't want to paralyze them and then you can't see and you're thinking, 'Well, god, that guy is not very good. Well, it's because he's thinking so much,’” MacIntyre said. “The second half we'll be putting in more and more, but we will not have the whole offense or the entire defense in by the end of spring.

“They will have all the major concepts in though, which to me learning anything is learning the concepts. If you learn the concepts and you can add wrinkles to it, you're fine.”

MacIntyre and his coaches have insisted they haven't formed opinions about players ahead of time through film study of last season. He said he is waiting to get on the field with the Buffs to see what each player is capable of first hand.

With that philosophy driving things, the Buffs enter spring with no depth chart. Players are grouped together by position and will earn their spot on a future depth chart based on how they perform.

MacIntyre said the first eight practices will be used primarily to teach and evaluate. At the midway point of spring, when players get a week off for spring break, coaches will begin forming a depth chart and will whittle the number of quarterbacks involved in the competition for the starting job from six to three.

It is a decidedly different approach than what can be expected in the future as MacIntyre continues to build his program.

“Next spring at this time, we'll just go out there and start calling it,” he said.

MacIntyre said he has four primary goals for the spring.

- * Come out completely healthy
- * Form a two-deep depth chart
- * Have good idea of where incoming freshmen will have to impact depth chart

* Continue building the culture he envisions

It has been more than three months since the disastrous 2012 season at Colorado ended with the Buffs producing a 1-11 record, the worst in the modern era of the program. Former coach Jon Embree was fired and the school turned to MacIntyre after looking at several other coaches.

MacIntyre turned around San Jose State from a program that was 2-10 and in trouble with the NCAA because of its shabby academic performance in his first season to one that excelled last season both on and off the field. CU and its fans are hoping he can pull off the same kind of transformation in Boulder and the work on the field begins Thursday afternoon.

MacIntyre said he has purposely taken things slow at other stops in his coaching career just as he plans to this spring at CU. He said it's a philosophy he has developed over time and one that was really ingrained in him during his time coaching in the NFL under coach Bill Parcells, who hung up a sign when he coached the Dallas Cowboys that said, "Knowledge equals confidence equals playing fast."

"I really believe that's true," MacIntyre said. "You don't have time to really think out there. You've got to react."

All of spring practices will be open to the media and the public. MacIntyre said he doesn't want any details of what goes on at practice published by fans on Internet message boards or blogs or he will be forced to close practices. It's unclear how CU plans to police the policy with at least a half-dozen fan sites and several newspapers who cover the team offering fans the ability to comment anonymously on their sites.

"Zero, I don't want anything out there," MacIntyre said when asked what his expectations are for things fans shouldn't be discussing on the Internet. "If we do and I can't stop it, then we'll have to close practice and I do not want to do that."

"I want a dad who is home on an afternoon and his 8-year-old boy looks at him and says, 'Dad, I want to go watch practice.' I want him to be able to take him to practice and experience that. I want him to fall in love with Colorado football or even fall in love with football because I love this game. So I do not want that to hinder it."

Follow Kyle on Twitter @KyleRingo

CU Buffs football gets big spring practice change from Mike MacIntyre

By John Henderson The Denver Post The Denver Post

Posted:

DenverPost.com

BOULDER — Every new coach who replaces a fired predecessor talks about changing the culture, as if the culture is found in the back of a refrigerator. In the case of Colorado coach Mike MacIntyre, he begins his first spring practice Thursday, but the atmosphere around the Dal Ward Center is already changing.

"I liked (predecessor Jon) Embree, but I believe Mac can get it done," junior center Daniel Munyer said. "He got it done at San Jose State. He brought in a different attitude here. Mac is real big on discipline and team accountability. We have family groups. If you miss a class or are late to anything, you're going to be running the next day.

"Just that mentality is going to weed out all the bad attitude we had here."

Wait a minute. Players rallied around Embree after his firing following a 1-11 second season. Was discipline a problem?

"It happens in every program," Munyer said. "Obviously, our record shows that. We went 1-11, so something was going wrong."

Continuing the culture change will be a big part of the first half of practice this spring. MacIntyre is splitting spring ball into eight practices from Thursday to March 22, then seven more from April 2-16.

Besides installing small parts of the offense and defense, Mac Intyre wants the team to come together and forget about the past.

"What I want to do is really bond and get a lot of self-worth and self-esteem at their position and understand it," he said. "If you do that, you keep maturing as a football team. It flows into summer workouts that are critical."

Players looking at MacIntyre's nearly six-week spring practice schedule, which includes a lot of weightlifting, may miss Embree even more. But there's a method behind it.

When MacIntyre played at Vanderbilt and Georgia Tech, he rarely lifted weights in spring ball. That changed when he got into coaching.

"I stretch it out," MacIntyre said. "I want to keep their lifting cycle going so we're able to lift three days a week hard. We want these kids within an 18-month period to completely change their bodies."

CU will practice Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, allowing for more recovery time. They'll meet Mondays and Wednesdays.

"We'll be able to install more, be able to have more questions answered and be more informative instead of trying to bang it out in a three-week period," MacIntyre said.

MacIntyre has no depth chart. He has no position battles bigger than others. When you're 1-11, job security is as prevalent as All-America rankings. He has watched video of every returning player, either in practice or a

game. While he won't sum up what he has inherited — "I'll wait until I see them in person," he said — he did point out one area of concern.

"This is not a negative, but we need more overall team speed on defense," he said. "That's why we signed fast, athletic linebackers. They're not the biggest. But we play eight 'spread' football teams who play hurry-up, fast-paced with five little guys: four fast receivers and a little running back. And the quarterback is always a runner.

"We need guys who can run and tackle."

Two spring highlights will be the return of junior receiver Paul Richardson, who missed last season with a knee injury, and a first look at redshirt freshman Shane Dillon, considered by many as the best quarterback on campus last year.

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COLORADO SPRING PRACTICE SCHEDULE

(All times 3:30-5 p.m.

March 7, 8, 12, 14, 15, 19, 21, 22 (scrimmage). April 2, 4, 5 (scrimmage), 9, 11, 13 (spring game), 15.

Spectator rules: No cell phones, pets, camera phones, video cameras, no phone calls, texts or live blogging.