

## Freshmen Powell, Abron performing well last couple games

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There have been few bright spots during this difficult football season at Colorado, but the development of freshmen running backs Christian Powell and Donta Abron is one of the positive story lines.

Powell and Abron combined to rush for more than 200 yards last week at Arizona. Powell produced his third 100-yard game of the season and Abron had a break-out performance with 83 yards.

The problem was CU's defense allowed Wildcats' running back Ka'Deem Carey to rumble for a Pac-12 record 366 yards and five touchdowns overshadowing the two Buffs.

Coach Jon Embree believes Powell and Abron along with junior Tony Jones gives the Buffs a nice blend of power, speed and pass-catching ability to build on at running back going forward.

"You are going to need all three guys as you continue to run the football because if a guy gets nicked or dinged, it is not like it puts your running game at a huge disadvantage," Embree said.

Perhaps the most impressive run of the season was provided by Powell last week when he had his helmet ripped off at the 4-yard line by an Arizona tackler, but he kept fighting and got into the end zone. By rule, officials blew the play dead when Powell's helmet came off but players didn't stop fighting until the ball was in the end zone.

Abron also had a touchdown called back. He sprung loose on a 74-yard scamper in the first half, but it was nullified by a holding penalty.

"He is obviously starting to hit his stride now," Embree said. "Earlier in the year, the adjustment of being a freshman and learning how to prepare for college football, how to practice and do all of those things, so he was a little slower coming around."

Powell leads the Buffs with 625 rushing yards. Abron is the team's third leading rushing with 167 yards. Powell already has produced the fourth most yards by a freshman running back in school history and he could rise all the way to the top of the list if he is able to put together two strong outings in the final two games of the season.

Powell could pass by Lee Rouson and O.C. Oliver this week. Lamont Warren set the school record for rushing by a freshman at 830 yards in 1991. Powell already has tied Warren's record for rushing touchdowns by a freshman with seven.

Wood to start

It looks like third-year sophomore Connor Wood will make his first college start for Colorado on Saturday when the Buffs host Washington at Folsom Field.

Coaches benched junior Jordan Webb a week ago because they said he had lost confidence. Fellow third-year sophomore Nick Hirschman started last week's game at Arizona but suffered a concussion and was replaced by Wood.

Embree said Wednesday he doubts that Hirschman will be able to play against the Huskies, setting up Wood's biggest opportunity so far. Wood has completed 18 of 36 passes for 254 yards and one touchdown with two interceptions while playing in parts of six games this season.

#### Richardson practicing

Wide receiver Paul Richardson has been practicing on scout team this week and Embree said he has looked good.

Richardson suffered a torn ACL last spring and has missed the entire season recovering from surgery. Embree said Richardson will be a full participant in spring ball in March and April.

"He's pretty much full-go right now," Embree said. "So he'll be good to go when we get going in the spring."

#### Iverson honored

Colorado longsnapper Ryan Iverson is one of 50 nominees for the Burlsworth Trophy, which is given annually to the best player in the nation who began their college career as a walk-on.

Iverson is a junior from Newport Beach, Calif., who has served as the Buffs primary longsnapper for three seasons. He is eighth in special teams points this season with 13.

The award is named after former Arkansas standout Brandon Burlsworth who became an All-American as a senior in 1998 and was drafted by the Indianapolis Colts. He was killed in a car accident 11 days after being drafted.

This is the third year the award has existed. It is administered by the Burlsworth Foundation, a charity dedicated to aiding the physical and spiritual needs of children, particularly children with limited opportunities.

#### Blonde ambition

Freshman defensive back Marques Mosley has died his hair blonde. Embree was asked about Mosley's new look following Wednesday's practice and said he has started calling Mosley Sisqo, after the singer who had a blonde hair when he made the "Thong song."

"When you're young, when you're 17, 18, you do some things," Embree said. "I just hope he gets a picture so when he looks back on it one of these days he realizes what he looked like."

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