



CU coach Jon Embree is hoping for more productivity from the quarterback position.

Photo Courtesy: Casey Cass, University of Colorado



Brooks: Starting QB TBD By 'Something Different'

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BOULDER - The specifics are expected at his weekly media conference, but Colorado coach Jon Embree said on Monday he would "look at something a little bit different" in determining this week's starting quarterback.

Embree conducts his weekly media conference on Tuesday, with this week's site the Dal Ward Athletic Center. The Buffaloes, mired in a five-game losing streak, play at Arizona on Saturday (11:30 a.m. MST, FX). CU is 1-8 overall, 1-5 in the Pac-12 Conference. The Wildcats, coming off a 66-10 loss at UCLA, are 5-4, 2-4.

CU's open competition at quarterback last week resulted in junior Jordan Webb retaining his spot for CU's game against No. 15 Stanford. Sophomore Nick Hirschman replaced Webb for one first-quarter series and started the second half. Hirschman, considered to be Webb's top challenger during last week's practices, ultimately was replaced by sophomore Connor Wood in the late stages of the Cardinal's 48-0 rout.

None of CU's QBs was effective in moving the offense, which finished with six first downs, 76 yards in total offense (1.7 yards a play) and minus-21 yards rushing. The trio's combined passing stats: 12-of-23 for 97 yards, with Webb throwing a first-quarter interception that was returned for a touchdown. Their individual

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stats: Webb - four-of-10, 19 yards; Hirschman - four-of-six, 12 yards; Wood - four-of-seven, 66 yards.

Addressing the QB issue following Monday afternoon's brief practice, Embree said he and his staff will "talk about what it looks like for the next couple of weeks, as far as some guys we want to evaluate and how we'll go about it."

Asked if there has been weekly competition at the position throughout the season, he said, "We have in the past, but we're going to look at something a little bit different . . . just see if we can jump start some things in a different way."

The Buffs' lack of running success last weekend was the result of the Cardinal - ranked second nationally against the run - "doing a lot of run blitzing" and in essence daring CU to pass "until you show them you can make some plays . . . we weren't able to do that. So that's what happens to you in the run game," Embree said.

The Buffs have three other QBs on their current roster who have not played - redshirt freshmen Stevie Joe Dorman and John Schrock and true freshman Shane Dillon. Dorman generally is a scout team QB, Schrock - who was impressive when he walked on two summers ago - is recovering from mononucleosis, and Dillon appears to have recovered from off-season shoulder surgery that led to the staff's decision to redshirt him this season.

Embree said Schrock has been involved in conditioning work "trying to get him built back up . . . he's still getting his strength back." Schrock traveled last season for sideline signaling purposes, but is yet to play.

THE BUCK STOPS THERE: In the Buffs' team meeting Monday before beginning preparation for the Wildcats, Embree told his players, "I take full responsibility for what happened on Saturday, and I'll keep preparing them. But I'm not going to let circumstances dictate how you prepare and how you go about getting ready for the next one. So that's what we'll do. I expect the leadership, I expect our guys to come out with energy and ready to go and prepare that way."

He said he knows his players still "care about it and are playing with maximum effort. I don't want them pointing fingers at each other or any of that stuff. So that's why I expressed (that) to them. They know I believe in them, they know how I feel about them. A few of the older guys came by Sunday to talk to me about some things, and that was encouraging. I want all the pressure on me, not on them."

Asked about an outside perception that some of his players have "cashed it in" in the wake of five consecutive losses by an average of 42 points, Embree said he didn't see that: "No, not one, not a single guy."

In the team meeting, he said he singled out freshmen defensive linemen John Tusso, Tyler Henington, Samson Kafovalu and Justin Solis for their efforts against Stanford. "I thought for some young guys going in a man's game - and that's what that was - they held up exceptionally well," Embree said. "They did a good job. Take out the scrambles and the reverse, and just the runs we were concerned about them running power and those things, I think (Stanford) ran 120 yards in 30-something carries - and that's pretty good. Because if those guys don't hold up, it's really ugly."

Solis left the game on a gurney with a neck injury but an MRI later came back negative. While Embree said Solis is "fine," the player was in a neck brace Monday but is expected to be cleared to practice next week for Washington's visit to Folsom Field (Saturday, Nov. 17).

BUFF BITS: Freshman cornerback Kenneth Crawley practiced Monday, and Embree said afterward that Crawley was "feeling better" and had some academic issues "he wanted to get cleaned up. He's fine." Embree indicated that Crawley was among a number of freshmen who have experienced the effects of their first lengthy college season. "I won't name names, but I'll bet I've had seven different freshmen in there (his office)," he said. "It's a long season for them. A lot of those guys have from eight to ten hours of study table. I know they don't feel like they have time to exhale . . . at different times, they're all like, 'I didn't know college football was like this.'" He said his freshmen are "really playing well; they're going to be some really good players." . . . Kickoff for the Washington game will be at 11:30 a.m., with the contest televised by FX. The season/home finale against Utah on Friday, Nov. 23 will be televised either by FX or FOX and kickoff at 1 p.m.

Football: Jon Embree takes responsibility for CU Buffs' latest loss

By Kyle Ringo Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

Despite five consecutive blowout losses with final scores that might lead some to believe otherwise, Colorado coach Jon Embree insisted he has seen no evidence of quit in a single player on his roster.

The Buffs began preparations Monday for their final road trip of the season this week at Arizona, a Jekyll and Hyde team that could be without its starting quarterback.

CU is coming off a 48-0 loss to Stanford at home. It was the first home shutout in 26 years. The Buffs have been outscored 168-20 in the past three games and generated less than 100 yards of total offense against Stanford.

Embree said he took responsibility for the latest loss while addressing his players in a team meeting.

"I know they care about it and I know they're playing with maximum effort so I don't want them feeling like pointing fingers at each other or any of that stuff," Embree said, when asked why he felt compelled to tell players it was his fault. "They know I believe in them. They know how I feel about them. A few of the older guys came by Sunday to talk to me about some things, and that was encouraging.

"Put all the pressure on me, not on them."

CU athletic director Mike Bohn told the Camera after the Stanford game that changes will be made in the football program at the end of the season. Embree confirmed Monday he has talked to Bohn about those changes.

"As that time approaches, we'll talk about those things," Embree said. "Right now it's all about finding a way to beat Arizona."

Embree was asked if he would have a problem making changes to his coaching staff if his bosses asked him to.

"I don't anticipate them asking me to do that, so I don't want to answer a question like that that would be hypothetical like that," Embree said.

Embree said he doesn't believe he and his offensive coaches made any big mistakes in preparing for Stanford. He said the Buffs' problem was not being able to make plays in the passing game against a team ranked No. 2 nationally against the run.

Embree is expected to share his plan today for the quarterback position for the rest of the season. Junior Jordan Webb has started every game, but third-year sophomores Nick Hirschman and Connor Wood both have received playing time this season and are expected to continue to get opportunities in some fashion.

Solis expected back

Embree said freshman defensive lineman Justin Solis was one of four defensive linemen he praised in front of the whole team for great effort in the Stanford game.

Solis was taken off the field on a stretcher after suffering a neck strain. He passed all tests at a local hospital and Embree said Solis is likely to return in two weeks for the Washington game.

Freshman wall

CU has played 13 true freshmen this season and Embree said he believes they have performed well, aside from some mistakes that are typical of all freshmen.

Embree said at least seven freshmen have told him they are struggling with the length and grind of their first college season and the adjustment to the academic workload.

"It's a long season for them," Embree said. "The demands, a lot of those guys have eight to 10 hours of study table. They never feel like they have time just to exhale."

Notable

Embree said freshman cornerback Kenneth Crawley was at practice Monday and missed last week's game with a sickness and some academic issues. ... Colorado's next home game Nov. 17 against Washington will kickoff at 11:30 a.m. and will be televised by FX.

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