

By: CUBuffs.com



Rick George Makes Appearance At Football Practice

Release: August 11, 2013

By: Anthony Lepine, Student Assistant SID

BOULDER--Day six of fall camp featured a special visitor on Sunday. Rick George is on campus one day prior to his official start date as new athletic director of the University of Colorado.

George's first order of business was to take a look at the progress being made by coach Mike MacIntyre's football team. George certainly liked what he saw.

"They got a lot of work done in a short period of time," George said. "They had a lot of things going on, which I really liked, and they got a lot of reps in."

On Monday, George will officially become the sixth athletic director in school history. He succeeds Mike Bohn who held the same position from 2005 until earlier this summer.

For George, getting on the practice field was something he has long awaited since his last memories of CU's 1990 national championship season. During that period he served as assistant athletic director of football operations under Bill McCartney.

"I have fond memories of work we did out here in preparation of the national championship 23 years ago, and it's been about 23 years since I've been back on this field," George said. "It's great to be out here, great to be around young people. I like what coach Mac and his staff are doing. It's a great day."

George spent the previous five years working for Major League Baseball's Texas Rangers serving as president of business operations.

Coach MacIntyre was more than delighted that George decided to spend his first few hours back on campus observing his football team and offering his input. George spoke with the team as practice wrapped up.

"I think it is very important for them to meet Rick," MacIntyre explained. "He just got here today, and the first place he came was the football fields; so that was exciting. He talked to the team and he's been on this field before and seen teams practice and worked with him. I think it was nostalgic for him and at the same time, he's excited about the future and what's going to happen."

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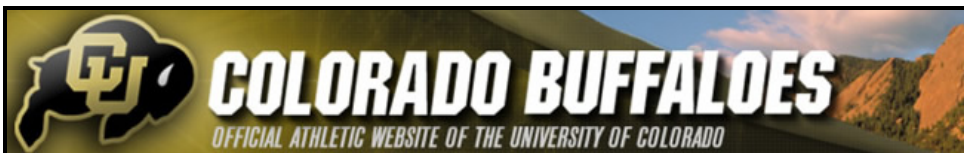
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The first session of two-a-days will take place on Monday with a morning session starting at 8:30 a.m. and an afternoon practice beginning at 4 p.m.

Colorado Buffaloes Football

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By: CUBuffs.com

Tight end Alex Wood and Newsradio 850KOA's Mark Johnson

Brooks: Giveaways, Takeaways From CU Media Day 2013

Release: August 10, 2013

By: B.G. Brooks, Contributing Editor

BOULDER – Bits, pieces, morsels and scraps from Colorado's football Media Day, an annual Saturday that signals camp is well underway, the college season is creeping ever closer and the notes season is already here:

IS A QB DECISION NEAR? Coach Mike MacIntyre offered a definite maybe.

On Saturday, Aug. 17, – or 15 practices into the 29 before the opener against Colorado State (Sept. 1, Denver) – the Buffs will have their first major scrimmage of camp.

Would having a starting quarterback emerge following that scrum be a safe bet?

Answered MacIntyre: "I don't know . . . but they all are making progress."

He and offensive coordinator/QB coach Brian Lindgren are perusing four candidates: junior Connor Wood, sophomores Stevie Joe Dorman and Jordan Gehrke and freshman Sefo Lufau.

Both MacIntyre and Lindgren said before camp opened last week that Wood went in with the lead, and he apparently has not surrendered it. But MacIntyre wants to be positively sure, certain and unshakeable about his No. 1 before he makes the announcement.

He said all four would continue to be put in different situations during the upcoming week, which will help the further evaluation of each player. He also said he hasn't at all "been disappointed" in Gehrke, the junior college transfer who was brought in to push Wood.

But the surprise of the camp thus far at position might be Dorman, who has quietly stayed engaged

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through the staff change and a roster depletion that saw the QB numbers reduced from a possible eight to four.

"He's really come along since spring and is having a good camp," Lindgren said of Dorman. Lindgren also said Liufau has "picked things up very quickly" and has impressed with his athleticism.

Added MacIntyre on Liufau: "He looked good, he did a good job today in the two-minute (drill). He moves in the pocket well, he is very accurate throwing on the run and I thought he did a good job and has done a good job all week. He seems very calm and poised."

But the best overall plan – if Wood stays solid through camp and if Gehrke and Dorman keep absorbing the scheme and continue to improve – would be to redshirt Liufau.

MAC II ON HIS REDSHIRT PHILOSOPHY: CU's camp roster includes 21 true freshmen and 11 invited walk-ons. The best-case scenario: redshirting all the newcomers.

That might not be possible, and here's the first thing MacIntyre weighs when he makes that decision: "Is he physically mature enough to play at this level?" Then, MacIntyre asks the same question about a freshman's mental makeup.

If the answer is "no" to both questions, the redshirt goes on. In some cases – take middle linebacker Addison Gillam, who participated in spring drills – the "yes" answers are as obvious as shoulder pads and chinstraps. Gillam, a 6-3, 225-pounder who can run, will play, probably start and is expected to perform well.

Another freshman who is showing up well, according to upperclassmen, is defensive back Chidobe Awuzie, a 6-0, 190-pounder who already looks at home in the secondary. "He's really picked things up fast at nickel and corner," said senior safety Parker Orms.

And there are three freshman receivers – Elijah Dunston, Devin Ross and Bryce Bobo – that bear watching. Conveniently and respectively, they wear Nos. 1, 2 and 3. Another freshman wideout to watch is Jeff Thomas; he wears No. 9 and was on hand for spring drills, although he was limited by a hamstring injury.

IT'S ALL ABOUT TEMPO: Since camp opened last Tuesday, players have been impressed if not surprised by the speed and precision of MacIntyre's practices. In a 20-minute segment of Saturday morning's work, he said the offense got in 42 repetitions – speedy work by anyone's count.

"Our practice tempo is different and they have really bought into it," he said. "The more repetitions, the better you get, I'm a firm believer in that."

MacIntyre also has been utilizing two practice fields with two units (usually Nos. 1-2 on one field, Nos. 3-4 on the other) working simultaneously on each.

"We've been running a lot of plays in team (drills) and everybody is getting reps, which is a great idea," said junior corner Greg Henderson. "If somebody goes down, the person behind him knows what to do and aren't shock when they get in the game."

"There's a lot of attention to detail and they explain everything to us. They just don't put us out there. Then it's up to you to show what you've learned. It helps a lot."

Henderson said that approach worked for MacIntyre and his staff at San Jose State and, "I think it will work here, too."

SPECIAL TEAMS TALK: CU has a coach – Toby Neinas – who works solely with special teams. He doesn't split his time among tight ends, etc., which can be the norm on some staffs and was on previous CU staffs.

Having Neinas devoted only to special teams has meant more instructional time for the kickers/punters, said junior placement specialist Will Oliver. In the past, he noted, the kickers were told what to work on and expected to do it with little or no supervision.

"That's not like having a coach there working with you," Oliver said. "This is the better way."

Oliver, who kicked six of eight field goals and 28 of 28 PATs last season, also has been punting in this camp. "First time in two years," he said. "I'm still bring my leg across my body (as he does placekicking) but it feels pretty good."

The Buffs' returning punter is junior Darragh O'Neill, a member of the Ray Guy Award preseason watch list.

CU has a new kicker in camp – Diego Gonzalez – but he’s not eligible this season. He will have three years of eligibility beginning in 2014.

MacIntyre said he challenged Neinas “to find the best kicker in America and he came back and said, ‘Coach, I found the best kicker – but he’s not in America’ . . . I said, ‘OK.’”

Gonzalez, a 5-11, 200-pounder, is from Guadalupe, Nuevo Leon, Mexico, and, according to MacIntyre, “has a very powerful leg.”

And a final special teams note: With an eye on a possible NFL future, senior snapper Ryan Iverson has added 12 well-place pounds to his 6-0 frame and is up to 225. The camp roster lists four other players behind him – sophomore Keegan LaMar, freshman Blake Allen and redshirt freshman Trevor Carver.

IS PERCEPTION REALITY? Coming off a 1-11 season and last-place finish in the Pac-12 South, the Buffs have received no preseason love from most prognosticators. No surprise there.

MacIntyre was asked Saturday about his perception of the public perception of his first CU team. His answer: “I guess the public’s perception, if you read the magazines, is not very good. I tell the kids all the time to block out the noise. All we have to worry about is ourselves – our guys that are putting their helmets on. We just have to worry about what we’re doing. We can’t listen to everything else all around.

“To really be a good team and a good leader sometimes you have to kind of put the blinders on and just keep going. People don’t think you can do it and then all of a sudden it happens. You see it happen all the time. Look at the Pittsburgh Pirates. You see it happen all the time.. It’s amazing how that happens in sports. I think that’s one of the great things about sports. It’s not a sure thing every Saturday that this is going to happen so I think that’s exciting. We’re really excited about this season. Our players are working extremely hard and thinking they can go toe to toe with anybody they play. That’s what we want to do.”

NOTABLE: Crawley is listed at 6-1, 165 on the most recent roster. He says – and a bit indignantly – that he weighs 170 and is noticeably stronger and faster this season. Orms on Crawley: “He’s matured. He’s impressed me so far.” . . . Junior receiver Paul Richardson sat out Saturday morning’s practice to rest his surgically repaired knee. That might happen more than once in camp. Receivers coach Troy Walters has told “P-Rich,” “It doesn’t matter how explosive you are, if you don’t stay healthy you can’t help us. He’s got to understand that.” . . . MacIntyre calls Richardson “exciting to watch. You throw it up and watch him get underneath it. If I was a quarterback that would be exciting to me, but we’ve got other wide receivers who have been making plays and doing things, too.” . . . CU’s offensive line looks to have its starting tackles in place – senior Jack Harris on the left side, sophomore Stephane Nembot on the right. The line’s mid-section, said MacIntyre, is unsettled because of the number of players who can play both guard and center. Combinations are still being scrutinized . . . After one practice Sunday morning (8:45-11:30 a.m.), the Buffs on Monday are scheduled for the first of five two-a-day practices. Monday’s practices will be 8:30-10:45 a.m. and 4-6 p.m. Other two-a-day drills are scheduled on Wednesday and Friday of next week (Aug. 14, Aug. 16) and Aug. 19 and Aug. 21.

Contact: BG.Brooks@Colorado.EDU

Colorado Buffaloes Football

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Football: MacIntyre mulling playing time CU Buffs' true freshmen

By Kyle Ringo Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

DailyCamera.com

The Colorado football program played a total of 28 true freshmen over the past two seasons combined -- 13 in 2012 and 15 in 2011 -- and the Buffs led the nation in games started by true freshmen last season with 57.

It could be headed for another double-digit total in coach Mike MacIntyre's first season.

MacIntyre spelled out the criteria he uses for deciding whether to play a true freshman during his media day press conference Saturday afternoon following a morning practice.

He said there are two basic areas he considers before playing a true freshman. Is the player physically and mentally prepared to play and will he play a significant number of plays if coaches put him on the field?

"I look at numbers of plays," MacIntyre said. "I look at where they would fit in. I look at if so-and-so got hurt in the fifth game, would he be ready to do it then? Is he better than the other guy? So there are all these scenarios."

Former CU coach Rick Neuheisel visited CU camp earlier this week in his role as an analyst for the Pac-12 Network and said a big part of the Buffs' struggles the past two years has been having too many true freshmen on the field against older players on other teams.

"How many freshmen were on the field last year?" Neuheisel asked. "That means they're not developed. That means they haven't had a year of strength and conditioning. Not only are they not ready for it, but it damages their confidence because it's such a hard game to play."

"So to be able to redshirt guys and get them up to speed nutritionally and strength- and conditioning-wise, not to mention academically, that's a huge deal."

Not much is expected of the Buffs this season from those outside the program because the team was beaten so soundly in so many games last year. Given that fact, Neuheisel was asked if it would behoove MacIntyre and the long-term future of the program to resist playing so many true freshmen this fall.

"I'm not going to tell him what he should and shouldn't do," Neuheisel said. "He's going to have to see who is ready and who is not, but the facts of the matter are, no one can argue that guys with a year under their belt usually perform better."

Follow Kyle on Twitter @KyleRingo

First-year coach not concerned with past results or outside predictions

By Brian Howell, Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

DailyCamera.com

Following a 1-11 season that was ugly in a lot of ways, there isn't much expected of the Colorado football team this season.

First-year Buffaloes head coach Mike MacIntyre isn't too interested in outside expectations, though, and he isn't too interested in talking about last year.

"I don't talk about last year's season at all," MacIntyre said Saturday at CU's annual media day press conference. "I know that they do and I hope that they do, but I don't bring up anything about last year or things that went on. All I talk about is the future and now. I talk about now more than I do the future. I talk about what we do now reaps dividends in the future. I focus on the now, I focus on the individuals here."

During the 2012 season, the Buffaloes were blown out in a lot of games, and MacIntyre understands the memory of those games is still in the minds of his players.

"As a football player and as an athlete, I imagine you think about different games or different guys you went up against that you might like to get them again when you see them again," he said. "That's a natural competitive instinct and I would hope that they have that, but that's not something that I dwell on at all."

Because the Buffs struggled so much last year -- leading to Jon Embree being fired and MacIntyre being hired -- they are generally picked to finish last in the Pac-12. MacIntyre tries to avoid getting caught up in those projections, though.

"I guess the public's perception, if you read the magazines, is not very good," MacIntyre said. "But, I tell our kids all the time and I tell myself all the time -- and I truly believe this -- block out all the noise. All we have to worry about is ourselves."

MacIntyre said he doesn't concern himself with past results because they have little bearing on how the Buffs will perform in the future.

"It's amazing how that happens in sports," he said of unpredictable results. "I think that's one of the things that's great about sports; it's not a sure thing every Saturday that this is going to happen. I think that's exciting and we're really excited about this season. I know our players are working extremely hard and believing that they can stand toe-to-toe with anybody they play."

This is MacIntyre's second head coaching job, and the second time he's taken over a struggling program.

He was hired at San Jose State in 2010, one season after the Spartans went 2-10 and were blown out in several games. The Spartans actually got worse in 2010, going 1-12, but then went 5-7 in 2011 and 11-2 last season, including a bowl victory.

MacIntyre is hoping for a similar turnaround in Boulder, but said he's not exactly going about it the same way.

"My first year as a head coach (in 2010), I was running around trying to put out every fire there was," he said. "I'm a lot better this time around than I was the first time. Also, our coaching staff was all brand new (in 2010). All the guys here know what we want, so we're all moving in the same direction.

"We're doing some things similar, but every school is different. You always have to tweak it here and there, but our core values are always going to be the same."

So far, the players appear to be on board with what MacIntyre and his staff are trying to accomplish.

"With these young men, it seems to me they've done everything we've asked them to do," he said. "They've been very spirited in our practices.

"They're working extremely, extremely hard. The one thing I see in them is a willingness and a work ethic by the majority of the players that is phenomenal."

Six captains -- Jack Harris, Paul Richardson, Chidera Uzo-Diribe, Paul Vigo, Derrick Webb and Connor Wood -- were named in June, and that has helped the team grow off the field, MacIntyre said.

"I feel like the overall character of the team is going in the right direction," he said. "The leaders I lean on are the six captains. We've had a lot of meetings together and we talk quite often to try to get the culture across that we want. It's fun watching guys mature in that process."

MacIntyre said that in the few months he's been on the job, he's seen his players doing things together and helping each other out, while continuing to put in a lot of work.

"I've seen more excitement and enthusiasm than we saw in the spring," he said. "That shows you they're buying into what's going on and they're working extremely hard. It's hard work, but they're also finding a way to enjoy it.

"I think that's how you get better at anything you do in life. If you don't enjoy your work you're not going to get any better at it."

Follow Brian on Twitter: @BrianHowell33.

Building up the Buffs: MacIntyre works to rebuild Colorado football program

Written by Kelly Lyell

Aug. 11, 2013 |

coloradoan.com

BOULDER — Mike MacIntyre guided a San Jose State program that hadn't had a winning season since 2006 to an 11-2 record and No. 21 end-of-season national ranking in both major polls in just his third season.

Now, he's trying to turn around a similarly afflicted University of Colorado program following the same basic blueprint. And he brought most of the people who helped him find the way in San Jose to Boulder, including both his offensive and defensive coordinator, four of his seven position coaches and his strength coach.

They've proven they can take a downtrodden program and bring it back up — quickly.

"You've seen him turn around a program before, so that makes you much more confident," sophomore running back Christian Powell said Saturday during the Buffaloes annual media day.

There wasn't much confidence to work with when MacIntyre arrived, given the Buffs were coming off a 1-11 season that ended with an eight-game losing streak and the firing of coach Jon Embree after just two seasons.

That made it relatively easy, senior defensive end Chidera Uzo-Diribe said, for players to buy into MacIntyre's philosophy.

And, like Jim McElwain had done a year earlier when he took over Colorado State University's football program, the first step in the rebuilding process was to change the culture, beginning with the team itself — repairing a fractured locker room and bringing players together as a family.

MacIntyre, 48, broke the team up into smaller "family units" of 11 or 12 players apiece that rotate every few weeks to help players truly get to know one another. The players in a unit spend time "just hanging out together," senior receiver Paul Richardson said.

But in doing so, they learn a lot about one another and start building the kind of bonds that will allow them to help out a teammate who's struggling, even one you might be competing with for a starting job.

"We're becoming more of a unit, a family, because we realize the only way to be successful — the only way to go out and get wins — is to become one," Powell said. "We can't be a whole bunch of individuals."

Big mountain to climb in Colorado

Kelly Lyell, USA TODAY Sports

4:27 p.m. EDT August 11, 2013



(Photo: Ron Chenoy, USA TODAY Sports)

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BOULDER, Colo. — Mike MacIntyre guided a San Jose State program that hadn't had a winning season since 2006 to a 10-2 regular season en route to a No. 21 final ranking in the USA TODAY Sports Coaches Poll.

Now, he's trying to turn around a similarly afflicted University of Colorado program following the same basic blueprint. And he brought most of the people who helped him find the way in San Jose to Boulder, including his offensive and defensive coordinators, four of his seven position coaches and his strength coach.

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Before taking the Colorado job after the 2012 regular season, Mike MacIntyre coached San Jose State to its first year of 10 wins or more since 1987. (Photo: Jayne Kamin-Oncea, USA TODAY Sports)

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As the head of the family, MacIntyre focuses not just on what his players are doing on the football field, but what they're doing off the field, too. Attention to detail, he said, is critical in everything they do. Simply going to class isn't enough; he insists his players sit in the first three rows to ensure they'll be active participants.

There are specific steps, he said, that must be taken to reach every desired goal.

It's far too early, for instance, for Colorado to be preparing for the season opener Sept. 1 against Colorado State in Denver. The Buffs first have to get the basics of their new offensive and defensive schemes down and figure out what they're supposed to be doing before they can worry about what any of their opponents might do, MacIntyre said, sounding a lot like McElwain at this time last year.

"They have specific goals they want us to accomplish, and if we don't know those goals — if we don't know how we're going to get there — then those goals won't be accomplished," senior safety Parker Orms said.

Practices are a lot more organized than they were under Embree, players said, allowing them to get a lot more work in. At one point last week, MacIntyre said, his team ran 42 plays in a 20-minute stretch. It's an up-tempo practice style that players are learning to adjust to, Orms said, and one the Buffs hope translates into a faster-paced offense that will allow them to run more plays this fall.

But practices are fun, too, players said. Music was playing on loudspeakers throughout Saturday's workout, which like all CU practices this season, was open to the public. Defenders ran down the field to celebrate when a blocked field goal was returned for a touchdown during a full-team drill near the end of practice. Nearly 100 fans stopped in, too, at various times to catch a glimpse of what the Buffs were doing, many of them taking a break from bike rides along a trail adjacent to the practice facility. There's a roped-off area around the outside edge of the three practice fields where fans can stand and watch, and the team even puts out coolers of water with paper cups for spectators.

It's a big change from the Embree era, when practices were on the same fields but behind locked gates with black netting on the surrounding fences to make sure no one was sneaking a peek.

MacIntyre knows he's not going to change CU's program overnight. But having turned one program around, he's convinced he can do it again. And he clearly is pleased with the progress he's seen in the eight months since he was hired.

"I've seen more excitement and enthusiasm than I saw in the spring, so I think that shows that they're buying into what's going on," MacIntyre said. "They're working extremely hard, and it's hard work. But they're also finding a way to enjoy it, and I think that's how you get better at anything in life. If you don't enjoy your work, you're not going to get any better at it."

Kelly Lyell also writes for The (Fort Collins) Coloradoan, a Gannett property.

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