

## Sophomore corner feels more prepared heading into season

By Kyle Ringo Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

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Buffzone.com

Colorado cornerback Kenneth Crawley is eager to get his second shot at Colorado State.

Crawley and the Buffs will open the season in eight days against the Rams in Denver in the annual Rocky Mountain Showdown at Sports Authority Field. Crawley made his first career start in the first game of his college career against the Rams last season and came away with mixed feelings.

He finished second in tackles for the Buffs with seven total stops and returned three punts for 38 yards. He also muffed a punt, though it ended up having no negative repercussions, and he gave up a touchdown pass following a miscommunication with a teammate.

"I'm very prepared," Crawley said. "I know what to expect so I'm not nervous anymore. I'm a sophomore now and I feel as though I'm very confident."

Crawley played a lot of football last season and never made an interception in 642 snaps over 11 games. He figures to fill one starting cornerback role for the Buffs again this season along with junior Greg Henderson.

Getting shut out in interceptions has probably bothered him most during the offseason when reflecting on his personal performance in 2012. He said he had a hand on the ball on several occasions but wasn't able to make the catch.

Of course, he wasn't alone. The CU defense made just three interceptions all season and didn't come up with one in any of the final eight games. Crawley believes his fortunes and the team's will improve when it comes to interceptions and turnovers in general this season. Coaches have emphasized it every day since the start of spring drills and Crawley leads the defense in interceptions during fall camp this month.

"I'm eager to get my first one cause I'm thinking pick-six," Crawley said. "I'm hoping to be a ball hawk this year."

It's easy for a player to make such statements before the season. Every player in the nation is feeling optimistic at this time of year. So what is going to make the difference for the former four-star recruit from Washington D.C.?

Crawley said perhaps the biggest lesson he learned during a difficult true freshman season is how vital the pregame film study is at this level.

Several veteran members of last year's team seemed to question Crawley and other freshman playing on defense after a blowout loss at Southern Cal. Ray Polk and Parker Orms said at the time that younger players needed to embrace film study. Crawley said he came to CU from a high school program in which he and his teammates did more film study than most of the opponents they played. But Crawley said he probably slacked off too much in studying film last

year.

He won't make that mistake again.

"Everything goes on in the film room," Crawley said. "You've got to know concepts and what they're running and how they try to trick you with plays and stuff. Everything is in that film room. It converts on to that field. So you've got to study, study, study, and study hard. That's something as a freshman I didn't know. I was still in the high school swag."

*Contact staff writer*

*Kyle Ringo at*

*ringok@dailycamera.com*

*or twitter.com/kyleringo.*

## **CU Buffs defensive coordinator will coach from the box again this season**

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Colorado defensive coordinator Kent Baer has spent the majority of his career coaching from the sidelines. It's where he loves to be on game day.

But when he joined coach Mike MacIntyre's staff at San Jose State three years ago, there was only one other defensive coach on the staff with any experience. So MacIntyre asked Baer to leave the sidelines, and call games from the coaches box.

Baer has settled into that routine coaching under MacIntyre for the past three years and will coach games from the box again in 2013 during his first year with the Buffs. But he said he's love nothing more than to be able to run out on to Folsom Field behind Ralphie V and be one the sidelines again at some point.

"The only thing I miss is those kids' faces on the sidelines," Baer said. "When you win a game, you can't wait to get down and see their faces and seeing how excited they are. That's what I miss. The excitement that happens on the sidelines."

*Contact staff writer Kyle Ringo at [ringok@dailycamera.com](mailto:ringok@dailycamera.com) or [twitter.com/kyleringo](https://twitter.com/kyleringo).*