

Defender spent some of 2011 suspended, is a captain for 2013

By Kyle Ringo Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

Paul Vigo came uncomfortably close to losing an opportunity of a lifetime two years ago when he was suspended from the Colorado football team for violations of team rules.

He spent a sizable chunk of the 2011 season suspended and unable to help his teammates during a difficult fall.

Looking back on that time now, Vigo sees it as a pivotal turning point in his development as a person and a football player. He blames the suspension on being involved with too many distracting forces off the field here in Boulder and back home in New Brunswick, N.J.

Vigo managed to earn reinstatement to the team and eventually earn his degree in sociology. Entering his senior season this fall, he is working on a second major and basking in the pride of being the first in his family to earn a college degree.

He is also intensely proud to have been named a team captain by his teammates and coach Mike MacIntyre last month.

Though he acknowledges that a year ago at this time, not many folks outside the program would have pegged him as a candidate to be a captain as a senior.

"That is completely fair," Vigo said. "I think my teammates, even last year, they really looked up to me and listened to me. I had a voice on the team. What separated it for me within the last year I guess is sacrificing the social aspect of going out and getting involved into too many things. I've really been buying into my faith and things that I believe in.

"Basically, that has just been helping me be a light to my teammates."

Vigo said he has always believed in a higher power but was never actively involved in any organized religion until the past two years. He said becoming a Christian and learning more about faith, sacrifice and forgiveness has helped him turn things around.

He is one of only six members of the 2009 recruiting class who remain in the CU program. He has played in the secondary for two position coaches and linebacker for two position coaches and finally has found a comfort level with this coaching staff that he hasn't previously enjoyed.

"I think last year and the years before it was more of, did the coaches see me as a leader? Because I know the team saw me as a leader by far," Vigo said. "I don't think the coaches had complete trust in me to hold that position.

"With the new coaches coming in, they see me through my work ethic and how I communicate with the guys. I don't think it was a problem for them to put me in that category."

Vigo has obviously covered a lot of ground between those dark days of his 2011 suspension and

this summer as he serves as a role model and leader for younger teammates. Covering a lot of ground is exactly what he figures to be doing in the CU defense this season playing outside linebacker.

It says a lot about how Vigo is viewed within the program that he was named a team captain despite not being listed as a starter on the post-spring depth chart. Woodson Greer is ahead of him on the depth chart, but the reality is both are likely to see plenty of playing time.

Greer is more of a physical presence and a run-stopper and will probably be on the field more against those kinds of teams. Vigo will be called on to use his speed to help defend the plethora of spread, up-tempo offenses the Buffs will face in 2013.

"I'm excited for it because a lot of times I'm coming off the edge for pressure and other times I'm in the open field playing against slot receivers and stuff like that," Vigo said. "I think it's going to be similar for me to last year. It's going to be constant running around and I've got to get to the ball.

"In the Pac-12, you're dealing with skilled athletes who are good in space and that's where I have to make the plays at."

Follow Kyle on Twitter @KyleRingo

Kyle Ringo Blog: Derrick Webb is CU's latest Butkus Award candidate

By Kyle Ringo Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

Colorado captain and senior linebacker Derrick Webb is the program's latest linebacker to land on the preseason watch list for the Butkus Award.

CU has produced two Butkus winners in Alfred Williams and Matt Russell as well as two runners-up in Russell and Jordon Dizon along with numerous others who have been nominated for the award.

Webb is one of 11 linebackers from the Pac-12 Conference on this year's preseason Butkus Award list. UCLA has three players on the list.

Webb was voted one of six CU team captains in June when players returned to campus for the summer. He is expected to be the anchor of a defense that is trying to rebound from being the worst in several major statistical categories last season.

Webb played in all 12 games as a junior last season and led the Buffs with 88 total tackles. Only five of those tackles went for losses. He has made 159 total tackles in his career.

Follow Kyle on Twitter @KyleRingo