

CU Buffs' QB Shane Dillon transferring to play basketball

By Kyle Ringo Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

Attrition continues to be a major problem for the Colorado football program and a key ingredient to the struggles of the program.

It struck again Tuesday with the departure of once-coveted quarterback Shane Dillon, who has decided to give up football to pursue a college basketball scholarship.

Dillon called basketball his first love in a press release issued by the school. He is 6-foot-5 and averaged 19 points and 13 rebounds as a senior in high school and has spent a year dealing with a bad throwing shoulder, but he said that injury didn't impact his choice.

"I always kind of felt my decision that I had to play football was forced upon me a little bit," Dillon said in the press release. "People told me I had to make a decision by the end of my junior year between football and basketball because quarterbacks all seemed to commit pretty early. Basketball has always been my passion, and even though I really enjoyed my year here, I felt the time is now for me to make the change."

Who could have seen that coming two years ago when former CU coach Jon Embree landed a commitment from Dillon, who was then an Elite 11 quarterback with numerous scholarship offers?

Fans have been frustrated the past two seasons to see so many true freshman playing for the Buffs. CU led the nation in games started by freshman last year with 57 and 38 of those came on defense, which was also tops in the nation. A key reason CU needed so many freshman playing was nine members of the 2008 recruiting class, players who could have been seniors last fall, never made it to their senior seasons in Boulder.

Unlike college basketball, it's very difficult to win college football games with a lot of freshmen on the field because they simply don't have the strength and experience to matchup with third, fourth and fifth-year players they have to block and tackle.

Attrition isn't a problem unique to Colorado. Every program in every college sport in the nation deals with it to some extent, but it has become a major issue in Boulder because the number of players leaving the program before completing their eligibility has been so high in recent years.

Three coaching changes in the past seven years has only added to the problem in Boulder.

In 2009, CU signed 20 recruits to national letters of intent in the fourth year of former coach Dan Hawkins' time in Boulder. Only six of those players remain on the roster for their senior season this fall. One member of the class used all four years of eligibility without redshirting and finished his career last season and another member of the class opted to forgo his senior season and was drafted into the NFL.

Still, a dozen members of the class either transferred, medically retired or never made it to CU

because of academic reasons.

In 2010, CU signed 24 players and only 12 of them remain in the program with fall camp starting in three weeks. Already eight members of the 23-man 2011 recruiting class have gone elsewhere.

That's 30 of 67 recruits who signed with the program over three years who failed to make much of an impact for the Buffs. And it's still possible that more members of those classes could wash out before completing their eligibility.

First-year coach Mike MacIntyre is never going to retain every player he signs to a national letter of intent. There are too many other opportunities available to players who might be facing two or three years of waiting before they get to play. It's also unrealistic to think that every player will succeed academically, avoid off-the-field trouble and injuries to make it through a four or five year career.

But improving the attrition rate is going to be an integral part of MacIntyre's efforts to turn around the CU program.

"We hate to see Shane go, he's truly a phenomenal young man, but we understand what he wants to pursue," MacIntyre said in the CU release. "I felt like he definitely had a future in football, but as Shane and I discussed, it was going to take hard work to succeed in football, and it's also the same for basketball. Instead of throwing passes for three hours in practice, he'll be shooting baskets.

"But you just can't change your passion, and his is basketball. It was a tough decision for him but one that he reached after working through it the entire year. We wish him the very best and we know that he will be successful in whatever he attempts in the future."

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Kyle Ringo Blog: Paul Richardson named to Biletnikoff watch list

By Kyle Ringo Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

After watching Paul Richardson practice this spring, new Colorado wide receivers coach Troy Walters said he believes the fleet-footed junior is a legitimate candidate for the Belitnikoff Award.

Walters knows a thing or two about what it takes to earn that honor having won the award in 1999 as a senior at Stanford.

So it was no surprise Tuesday when Richardson appeared as one of 75 wide receivers across the nation named to the preseason watch list for the award given annually to the best receiver in the nation. It is the second time Richardson has been on the watch list. He was added to the list three weeks into his sophomore season two years ago.

Richardson has averaged 14.6 yards per catch in the 21 games in which he has played. He has 73 career catches for 1,069 yards and 11 touchdowns and still hasn't played a complete season in Boulder because of injuries.

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CU Buffs QB Shane Dillon leaves, hopes to play college basketball

By David Krause *The Denver Post* *The Denver Post*

Posted:

DenverPost.com

New Colorado coach Mike MacIntyre has lost an option at quarterback for this season as redshirt freshman Shane Dillon announced Tuesday he is leaving the school to play basketball.

Dillon spent most of last season recovering from surgery on his right shoulder. In spring drills he was 19-of-39 passing for 185 yards but struggled in the final scrimmages. He was the third QB behind junior Connor Wood and Nick Hirschman, but Hirschman left in May to go to Akron.

Dillon said Tuesday that basketball is his "passion."

"I always kind of felt my decision that I had to play football was forced upon me a little bit," Dillon said in a news release from the school. "People told me I had to make a decision by the end of my junior year between football and basketball because quarterbacks all seemed to commit pretty early. Basketball has always been my passion, and even though I really enjoyed my year here, I felt the time is now for me to make the change."

He committed to CU and then-coach Jon Embree in May 2011 before his senior season.

"I felt like he definitely had a future in football, but as Shane and I discussed, it was going to take hard work to succeed in football, and it's also the same for basketball," MacIntyre said. "But you just can't change your passion, and his is basketball."

Dillon is the third quarterback this offseason to leave the roster. Besides the departures of Dillon and Hirschman, senior Jordan Webb had surgery on his ACL after getting injured in spring drills and will miss the season. The starter most of last season, Webb is currently suspended from the team after getting arrested for second-degree assault.

Under MacIntyre, the Buffs in May added Jordan Gehrke, a transfer after one season at Scottsdale (Ariz.) Community College. And on signing day in February, they added Sefo Liufau, who who threw for 7,297 yards and 68 touchdowns at Bellarmine Prep in Tacoma, Wash. Also on Colorado's roster at quarterback are sophomores Stevie Joe Dorman and John Schrock.

The 6-foot-5, 200-pound Dillon talked with CU men's basketball coach Tad Boyle about playing for the Buffs, but there were no scholarships available.

As a senior at Christian High in El Cajon, Calif., Dillon averaged 19 points and 13 rebounds; as a junior he averaged 25 points and 12 rebounds.

"I've grown up playing basketball my entire life, I've always been a basketball kid and have played since I was 4 years old," Dillon said. "I was a late bloomer in football and never started playing quarterback until halfway through my sophomore year."

Dillon was a prep All-American, ranked seventh nationally by PrepStar, and attracted scholarship

offers from the likes of Ohio State, Florida State and Miami.

Dillon started as a receiver in high school, and finished by throwing for 6,681 yards and 45 touchdowns (and 29 interceptions) in two seasons.

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Shane Dillon leaving Colorado for hoops

By Ted Miller

Redshirt freshman quarterback [Shane Dillon](#) is leaving Colorado because he wants to play college basketball, the school announced Tuesday.

Dillon, who was coming back from shoulder surgery, struggled during spring practices, when [Connor Wood](#) seemed to take the lead in the Buffaloes' quarterback competition. In the four main spring scrimmages, he completed 19-of-39 passes for 185 yards and two touchdowns (one interception), and rushed for 26 yards on 10 attempts.

But Dillon, 6-foot-5, 200 pounds, said this isn't about football but about his favorite sport being basketball.

"I've grown up playing basketball my entire life, I've always been a basketball kid and have played since I was 4 years old," said Dillon in a statement released by the school. "I was a late bloomer in football and never started playing quarterback until halfway through my sophomore year.

"I always kind of felt my decision that I had to play football was forced upon me a little bit," he added. "People told me I had to make a decision by the end of my junior year between football and basketball because quarterbacks all seemed to commit pretty early. Basketball has always been my passion, and even though I really enjoyed my year here, I felt the time is now for me to make the change."

Dillon's departure is another blow at the position for the Buffs. [Jordan Webb](#), the 2012 starter, blew out his knee during spring practices. [Nick Hirschman](#) opted to transfer to Akron. It's possible incoming freshman [Sefo Liufau](#) will be Wood's backup.

Dillon averaged 19 points and 13 rebounds as a senior, and 25 and 12, respectively, as a junior, at Christian High School in El Cajon, Calif., and was recruited by several schools for basketball.

"We hate to see Shane go, he's truly a phenomenal young man, but we understand what he wants to pursue," Colorado coach Mike MacIntyre said. "I felt like he definitely had a future in football, but as Shane and I discussed, it was going to take hard work to succeed in football, and it's also the same for basketball. Instead of throwing passes for three hours in practice, he'll be shooting baskets."

According to the news release, Dillon spoke with basketball coach Tad Boyle about the possibility of joining the CU men's team, but all scholarships in 2013-14 are spoken for, so he would have had to be a walk-on and then try to earn a scholarship a year from now. Said Dillon, "That's something my family really can't afford right now, or I would definitely have considered that option."
