



# COLORADO BUFFALOES

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*CU offensive coordinator/QB coach Brian Lindgren (center)*

*Photo Courtesy: CUBuffs.com*



## Brooks: No Returning Starter, No Problem For Lindgren?

Release: 07/24/2013 Courtesy: B.G. Brooks, Contributing Editor

**BOULDER** – Quick now . . . when was the last time Colorado went into a football season with a returning starter at quarterback? Brian Lindgren doesn't remember, but then he shouldn't be expected to.

Lindgren, about to enter his first August camp as CU's offensive coordinator/QB coach, knows only that it won't happen this season – and anything else on the subject is mostly irrelevant. From a trio of relatively untested candidates – junior Connor Wood, sophomore Jordan Gehrke, freshman Sefo Liufau – Lindgren must have one groomed and proficient enough to start against Colorado State on Sept. 1.

Sure, it would be nice to have an experienced guy taking the opening Sunday afternoon snaps in Denver. But lately, returning QB starters at CU have been as rare as palm trees waving on the Flatirons. The Buffs' last two-year starter at QB was Cody Hawkins (2007-08, portions of 2009-10); their last three-year starter was Joel Klatt (2003-04-05). The last QB to direct a winning season in Boulder was Klatt (7-5) in 2005.

Yes, it's been awhile.

Which brings us to 2013 and Lindgren, who was Mike MacIntyre's choice to plot San Jose State's offense and coach its QBs last season and MacIntyre's pick to fill the same role when CU came calling last winter.

Lindgren, who will turn 33 the day the Buffs open preseason camp (Aug. 6), conceded that the inexperience of his top three QB candidates puts him more behind the 8-ball than he found himself last summer at San Jose State.

"Yeah, I think so a little bit," he said. "You would like to have guys who have more experience and have played, gotten hit at this level . . . but those three guys (Wood, Gehrke, Liufau) are going to get a ton of repetitions during fall camp. That's going to make them better. There'll be learning along the way, but we'll also be putting them into situations where they can be successful."

The odds-on favorite to be MacIntyre's-Lindgren's pick to start against CSU is Wood, who had the benefit of spring drills in their pistol offense. With the departure of Nick Hirschman and the uncertain status of Jordan Webb (knee injury, legal issue), Wood's seven games in 2013 give him the most experience at his position. Since spring, Shane Dillon and John Schrock also have left the team, leaving four players (sophomore Stevie Joe Dorman is the fourth) in Lindgren's group for camp.

Lindgren isn't ready to scratch Webb for the entire 2013 season, noting Webb's knee rehab is progressing nicely. But, added Lindgren, "We're not counting on him early." He cited the possibility of Webb being available by mid- or late-season, but if that scenario played out it probably would mean one of the other QBs was injured, or one or more of them proved unproductive.

"We've got other options, so whatever happens with (Webb) is a bonus," Lindgren said. "But he's played enough so that it won't take him a ton of reps to get back into the flow of things . . . he's played a lot of football at this level, taken a lot of snaps; that's certainly valuable. We'll keep him in touch with the offense, keep him in the meetings as soon as he gets back with us."

In 10 games last season, Webb completed 144 of 265 passes for 1,434 yards (eight touchdowns, eight interceptions). He was sacked 39 times for losses of 237 yards. He suffered a torn ACL in his right knee early in spring drills, with the initial prognosis shelving him for the entire 2013 season.

Wood played in seven games last season and completed 21 of 42 passes for 252 yards (one TD, four interceptions). Lindgren is hoping that experience plus spring drills and spearheading the offensive players' summer work might accelerate Wood's advancement. "It's a huge advantage," Lindgren said, adding that Wood "is also mature and very professional in the way he goes about everything. He's obviously the frontrunner, but he still has to perform."

Ideally, Wood would solidify his spot within the first two weeks of camp, or after the first major scrimmage. "We want to see a guy separate and name him as soon as we can," Lindgren said. "It comes down to what coach MacIntyre is comfortable with, but ideally it would be in first week or two. It gives that guy a lot more time to get in sync with his receivers, his line, everybody. It's going to make the whole offense better."

Simply because of his experience at the junior college level, Gehrke, who played last season at Scottsdale (Ariz.) Community College, might offer Wood the biggest challenge. "We recruited him with the intention of him coming in and pushing Connor," Lindgren said. "I would expect he would be a little further along than Sefo just because he's a little older and has played a little junior college football. He's had that year and a half to develop that Sefo hasn't had. We're excited about him - it's why we recruited him. I like his personality and he can really throw it. He's definitely got that skill set as far as good feet and ability to throw. He's accurate."

Lindgren recognizes Liufau's ability and drive, but only in rare instances does a true freshman QB show enough in August camp to become a September starter. Said Lindgren: "I think it's tough and I told him that. He's a great worker, really mature, but the toughest part will be applying what he learned in a classroom setting then doing it at game speed, learning to play fast. I think we'll know from the first week or so. I would imagine he'll probably be a little rusty to start . . . it's just a lot to ask of a freshman."

No matter who's No. 1, he'll lack starting experience. And Lindgren doesn't want to overload him early. The Buffs' worst-case scenario: the running game is ineffective and the offense too frequently looks to an unproven QB to salvage drives with heroic plays.

"That's just not going to happen," Lindgren said. "You want to move the ball (running) and with short passes,

some deep play-action, some easier screens. You have to give him some confidence, and as we progress you put more on his plate. The run game will be key for us, huge, particularly early. It's got to take the pressure off the quarterback. He's got to be able to make throws where he's not having to make as many reads, adjustments – just throw it to the open guy. We want to make it pretty easy for him.”

That's what MacIntyre and Lindgren did last season at San Jose State with David Fales, a junior college transfer who offered glimpses of his promise during spring drills then provided lasting flashes of it in August. But, said Lindgren, the same slow-and-steady approach was taken with Fales, who was instrumental in the Spartans setting 27 school offensive records in 2012.

Fales, said Lindgren, “got better as last season progressed and by the end we were able to open up the playbook for him and give him more opportunities to make plays. What was interesting with him was going through the spring you could see that he could throw it and was skilled physically. But he was still learning the offense and making some mistakes.

“As we went through camp, he continued to make plays, was consistent and improved. But we didn't really see it until we got into game week and started to work with him as the starter and focused on him. You could really see him develop each week and get better, more comfortable out there.”

On more than one occasion, MacIntyre has credited Lindgren for Fales' development. Lindgren enjoys his role and should. He played QB at Idaho (2001-04) and was a team captain and first-team All-Sun Belt Conference. He set several school passing records despite this self-effacing self-analysis: “I wasn't mobile at all. I was a pocket passer with not a very strong arm. But I like to think I was accurate and had pretty good anticipation. I was pretty cerebral as far as learning the offense and knowing defenses – but I had to be given my athletic ability.”

Knowing the game and having played the position have helped him mold players like Fales and, hopefully, Wood & Co. Lindgren still holds high school passing records in Washington – he attended DeSales Catholic in Walla Walla – but says now his football knowledge coming out of high school was scant.

“I learned a lot, saw the other side of it,” he said. “Sometimes as coaches you get a little more advanced knowledge and you forget that players may not know what you know right off the bat. Realizing that and starting from square one helps you with them . . . how to teach concepts, reads, what can you expect them to go out and do – or is it asking too much?”

“There's a whole bunch of factors that people, fans, don't always see as far as pressure not being picked up, or him having to move off of his spot, or a defense that you hadn't expected to see. There's a lot of factors, but going through it as a player is huge in teaching it.”

In Woods, Gehrke or any of CU's QBs, Lindgren can't yet tell if he has a budding David Fales on the roster. He does know this: With the exception of Webb, whose availability is in question, his group's collective experience isn't ideal.

The ideal situation: Welcoming back a two-year starter and enjoying the continuity that would bring to an offense. “No question,” Lindgren said. “The confidence he gets, getting the rest of the offense to work with him, used to everything from his cadence to how he throws balls and make decisions, how he goes about the game and everyone getting in sync with each other . . . it's a huge deal.”

At CU of late, it's been a huge deficit. No continuity at the sport's most important position has been almost impossible to overcome. Now it's Brian Lindgren turn to come up with a solution.

**PAC-12 MEDIA DAY FRIDAY** – If football isn't in the air, it's close. Pac-12 coaches and two players from their teams will gather Friday at the Sony Studios in Culver City, Calif., to preview the coming season on Pac-12 Football Media Day.

CU will be represented by first-year coach Mike MacIntyre, junior receiver Paul Richardson and senior defensive end Chidera Uzo-Diribe. The Buffs contingent leaves for LA on Thursday.

You can hear directly from Richardson, MacIntyre and Uzo-Diribe. Tweet using #pac12fb to ask questions. CU's

turn at the podium is 12:05 p.m.. MDT.

Pac-12.com will offer exclusive video, behind-the-scenes access and a live stream of the main stage session starting at 10 a.m. MDT.

The attendees from each school:

**Arizona** – Coach Rich Rodriguez, Terrence Miller (WR), Jake Fischer (LB)

**Arizona State** – Coach Todd Graham, Taylor Kelly (QB), Will Sutton (DT)

**California** – Coach Sonny Dykes, Bryce Treggs (WR), Nick Forbes (LB)

**Oregon** – Coach Mark Helfrich, Marcus Mariota (QB), Ifo Ekpere-Olomu (CB)

**Oregon State** – Coach Mike Riley, Brandin Cooks (WR), Rashaad Reynolds (DB)

**Stanford** – Coach David Shaw, David Yankey (OL), Shayne Skov (LB)

**UCLA** – Coach Jim Mora, Xavier Su’a Filo (OL), Anthony Barr (LB)

**USC** – Coach Lane Kiffin, Marqise Lee (WR), Hayes Pullard (LB)

**Utah** – Coach Kyle Whittingham, Jake Murphy (TE), Trevor Reilly (DE)

**Washington** – Coach Steve Sarkisian, Keith Price (QB), Sean Parker (DB)

**Washington State** – Coach Mike Leach, Elliott Bosch (OL), Deone Bucannon (DB)

Contact: [BG.Brooks@Colorado.EDU](mailto:BG.Brooks@Colorado.EDU)

SHOW MENU



## Kyle Ringo Blog: CU Buffs AD Rick George will examine all options for future of Showdown

By Kyle Ringo Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

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Attendance at the annual football game between Colorado and Colorado State at Sports Authority Field in Denver has been dropping for several years leading the schools to consider moving the game back to campus sites.

Former CU athletic director Mike Bohn and his CSU counterpart Jack Graham were involved in ongoing talks about the issue prior to Bohn's forced resignation in May.

New CU athletic director Rick George told me this week he is aware of the decline in attendance at the game in Denver and he will explore all options available to CU in deciding what is best for the future of the game. Obviously, George plans to work with Graham on either moving the game back to campus or finding solutions for filling the home of the Denver Broncos, which holds more than 76,000 fans.

If I was George, I'd settle for nothing less than playing two games in Boulder for every one played in Fort Collins. The fact is, CU doesn't need CSU as badly as the Rams need to play the Buffs each year. The programs, despite the Buffs' recent struggles on the field and financially, just aren't on the same footing in terms of the fan support they receive and the conferences in which they compete.

CSU fans can rant and rave all they want, but they can't hide from their own performance at the ticket window. The reality is the bulk of the decline in ticket sales for games in Denver have come from the CSU side. The Rams sold fewer than 20,000 tickets to each of the past two games. They have attracted some pretty miniscule crowds at times in Fort Collins in recent seasons as well.

Attendance dropped to a record low last year for the Rocky Mountain Showdown in terms of games played in Denver. Only 58,607 attended. According to a press release issued after the game by CU, the Buffs accounted for 35,406 fans while CSU attracted only 18,169. The Broncos accounted for 5,032 tickets sold.

Let's keep in mind that both programs have been awful recently. So why does CU continue to sell most of its allotment of tickets while CSU comes up woefully short? As long as that continues to be the case, George will hold the power in the relationship and the negotiations.

If Graham balks at the idea of playing one in Fort Collins for every two in Boulder - and he has promised he will - then George should play out the contract and go back to playing CSU every three or four years. Perhaps then CSU could sell tickets to the game.

## Football: CU Buffs' Dorman hoping to get a shot at starting QB job

By Brian Howell Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

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Nearly the entire Colorado football team walked up the hill near the Dal Ward Center on a recent evening and not one player noticed the small snake slithering in the dirt along the side of the path.

Then, sophomore quarterback Stevie Joe Dorman made his way up the hill.

"Oh, look, a snake!," he said, as he picked up the small serpent.

Much like that snake, Dorman has gone unnoticed by many. He is one of only four healthy quarterbacks on the CU roster, yet he's the only one of the four who rarely gets mentioned in the battle for the starting job.

Connor Wood is the No. 1 quarterback going into camp, which opens next month. Junior college transfer Jordan Gehrke and true freshman Sefo Liufau are both considered to have legitimate opportunities at the starting job, despite the two of them only being on campus a few weeks.

Dorman, however, isn't conceding anything. The 6-foot-2, 220-pounder from Somerset, Texas, might be a long shot to win the starting job, but he continues to show up every day with an attitude of getting better.

"It's just a fight to go out and prove yourself everyday, and that's for everybody," Dorman said. "If you're the starter, your spot can be taken away just as quickly as the second-string guy or the third-strong guy. Things constantly change and I'm hopeful that I will prove myself to not only the coaches, but to everybody else, too."

Things have certainly changed since the Buffs went through spring practices.

Six quarterbacks threw passes during the three main scrimmages. One of those players, Jordan Webb, tore his ACL early in spring and won't be competing for the job in August. Three others have since left the team. Nick Hirschman transferred to Akron. Shane Dillon decided to quit football and pursue basketball at another school. John Schrock left the team to focus on his studies.

Among all the CU quarterbacks (counting Webb, the Buffs have five on the roster), Dorman has been on campus the longest, arriving a couple of months before Wood in 2011.

"That's a little weird, because I'm only a sophomore," he said.

When Dorman arrived, fans were eager to see what he could do. His uncle, Koy Detmer, was one of the best quarterbacks in CU history. Another uncle, Ty Detmer, was the 1990 Heisman Trophy winner while at BYU.

In high school, Dorman set a San Antonio area record with 9,253 career passing yards, while also throwing 94 touchdown passes and only 39 interceptions. So, expectations by some were rather high.

"My freshman year I felt the most (pressure)," he said. "(Koy) was such a good quarterback here that people expected the same thing out of me. It just hasn't worked out to where I have gotten a chance to play yet."

With three years of eligibility ahead of him, Dorman isn't even close to ready to giving up on his dream of becoming the starter.

"I am a different guy (from Koy and Ty), but I'm just as big of a competitor," he said. "It upsets me when I don't get to play, but that just makes me work that much harder at things and push myself to get on the field and actually play."

Regular communication with his uncles, including film sessions with Koy this past spring, have helped Dorman improve his mechanics and quarterback IQ. Having three quarterbacks leave in recent months has benefited Dorman, too.

"The four guys who are here take an even number of reps (in practice), but we take more now because there's only four guys," Dorman said. "The more reps you get the better you get. I think getting more reps will benefit everybody greatly."

If the battle in the fall truly does become a three-man race between Wood, Gehrke and Liufau, it could be a while before Dorman gets on the field, if ever, at CU. Dorman said he has thought about going to another school that might offer a better chance of playing, but it's never been a serious consideration to this point.

"I've just been waiting my turn and things will fall into place when they need to," said Dorman, who completed 17 of 31 passes for 137 yards and two interceptions during the spring scrimmages. "If I just work hard, I believe things will work out for the best, and if I'm not as good as the first-string guy, then that's how it is and we'll see how things go."

"I'm on full scholarship, so I get the good education of the university. If that is how it is and that's my shot and that's the best thing for me, then of course (I'll stay at CU). I'll get to work out and be on the team and I can say that I was a Buff for four or five years."

Dorman would love to be a Buff who actually plays, however, and he said he feels more ready to play than in the past.

Like the snake outside of the Dal Ward Center, he just needs someone to notice him.

*Follow Brian on Twitter:*

*@BrianHowell33.*

EYEOON

## College Basketball

## Why Shane Dillon picked hoops at San Diego over football at Colorado

By Matt Norlander | College Basketball Writer

July 25, 2013 4:22 am ET

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Shane Dillon was a highly touted QB who couldn't shake the feeling he was in the wrong sport. (Colorado Athletics)

Shane Dillon loved pretty much everything about the University of Colorado and the city of Boulder. Except the reason he went there: to play football.

So how does a promising quarterback prospect who can sling with striking ease a ball into a receiver's breadbasket more than 50 yards down the field; who took a 5-5 high school football team to a state championship-winner in two years; who was recruited by Ohio State, Florida, Miami and Colorado in football -- yet San Diego State, San Diego, UC Irvine and UC Santa Barbara in basketball -- how does that player even think about turning his back on the gridiron?

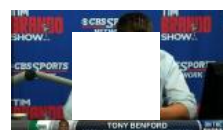
The story's a little complicated, yet it makes a lot of sense. Shane Dillon was a confused teenager who didn't properly sort out his priorities. And he said he [felt others ushered him into decisions he wasn't fully committed to making](#).

The 19-year-old two-sport athlete decided halfway through his high school career that he'd pick pigskin over hoops because, well, the reasons now aren't so easy to come up with. Surprisingly, the decision to commit to college as a football player came less than a year after Dillon had even played quarterback. And now Dillon, who announced his new college home on Wednesday, will play at the University of San Diego. For basketball, probably as a 6-foot-6, 210-pound small forward. His football career is done forever, more than likely.

This kind of conversion isn't common in college sports. Going from football to basketball is rare, if not unprecedented in the modern era -- particularly when you're a quarterback

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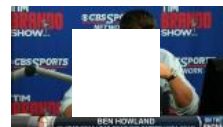
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prospect who was courted like Dillon was. He said there wasn't an exact moment of clarity or a spark when the decision was made, but he'd been thinking about it for the previous six or seven months.

"I've been a basketball kid my entire life," he said. "I've played since I was 4."

Yet playing quarterback didn't come until he had a driver's license. Even up through then, he planned on going to college for hoops. Football really started to become a big deal when he was a junior. Soon enough, Dillon said it felt like his decision was made for him in part because quarterbacks by and large make their college pick by the end of their junior year. In basketball, you're still in the thick of it by the end of the junior season, and many recruits often wait through the winter before settling on a school.

"I was a little bit bummed because I felt I had a few schools to choose from football," he said.

For the past 12 months, the kid had doubt about where his life was at. *What can I do on the court? Do I really want to do what I'm doing right now? Was football ever worth this?* In May he discussed with his parents his dubiety about playing football going forward. By the end of June, the decision was made. He enjoyed football, but it wasn't his passion.

"And I wanted to do my passion," Dillon said. So why football in the first place? Pressure from dad, partly. He had played at the high school and college level. Then came the training sessions with well-known George Whitfield Jr., who runs a quarterback training academy in Dillon's San Diego stomping grounds. Dillon, a naturally athletic kid, played receiver his freshman year and for most of his sophomore year. But the team wasn't that good, and so he got a shot at running the offense. Dillon said the reason he played quarterback, or was even open to it, was because of his father. And he enjoyed it as a high school activity.

"He pushed me into playing QB and said I had a real future in it," Dillon said of his father.

Soon enough, Dillon's talent at quarterback was evident. The summer going into his junior year was spent by taking a "college rock tour" on the East Coast. Camps galore, too. Then came the recruiting calls, much more for football than basketball. He was getting about 15 calls per week after he got home from school.

"It's taxing," the 19-year-old Dillon said. "At one point, I absolutely hated the recruiting process. I never really felt like I got to spend time alone because I was always on the phone or always talking to my parents about that schools I thought were interesting."

He looked forward to AAU basketball – playing with the San Diego All-Stars – because "it would get me away from the football recruiting aspect. I looked at that a little bit this past year, and I've always loved basketball more."

In talking on the phone with Dillon this week, the happiness with this choice was evident, as was the guilt over missing a year on the court. Dillon in fact had to give up playing AAU basketball toward the end of his final year because of football, a choice he said, "I'll probably regret for the rest of my life." Winning that state title was an incredible accomplishment. But it only put more pressure on Dillon to succeed at what many around him believed was his calling. He never allowed himself to fully buy into that, though.

Why not football and basketball at one school? Two colleges did offer him that. Harvard and Yale were the institutions willing to give Dillon both, but he passed on the opportunity out of reservation over completely losing a social life due to heavy studying and relentless athletic responsibility.

Before making the choice to leave Colorado, Dillon did approach Buffaloes basketball coach Tad Boyle. The team didn't have an open scholarship for him. Between that and the firing of football coach Jon Embree after the end of last season, the choice became more of a no-brainer as the months wore on. He told his parents he'd try to do workouts with football in the spring.

"But I knew my heart was somewhere else," Dillon said.

It always was. During the season, Dillon would sneak in pick-up games late at night, after football practice. And he upped his play on the court during formal intramural play in the spring.

"I probably shouldn't have played, but I played," he said. "That was the turning point for me. I looked at myself and said, If I'm sneaking in here and playing these games because I love it,

in a dance-off

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am I really doing what I want to do?"

Dillon goes to San Diego with 13 screws forever in his right shoulder, the result of a surgery from last year. He said that surgery and the intensified awareness of concussions in football had zero impact on his decision. He completed his exit interviews with Colorado this week. Next up is a trip back home, putting himself in the position that's always felt like the right fit.

**Topics:** Colorado Buffaloes, San Diego Toreros, NCAA

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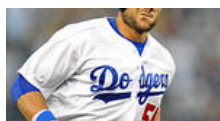
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