



By: US Press Wire
Freshman Addison Gillam leads the Pac-12 in tackles.

Buff's LB Gillam Continues To Be First-Year Standout

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BOULDER—The biggest talk around Colorado football in recent weeks has centered on the play of freshman linebacker Addison Gillam and post-practice Wednesday proved to be no different.

After four games, Addison's 12.2 tackles per game lead the Pac-12 Conference. As he continues to mature in the middle of the CU defense, the young linebacker may well be on his way to becoming a team cornerstone on which the Buffs can build for years to come.

"He's a really good young man," said Coach Mike MacIntyre. "He's almost too good to be true. He does everything right. He works hard and is very humble. He has great, great parents and great family up in the hills of California and he's always been really well-grounded and I think that helps him."

Despite all the accolades and praise Addison has received since bursting onto the college scene, he has never allowed himself to become overwhelmed by feelings of content or self-satisfaction.

"Personally, I can always work on trying to get more disciplined," said Gillam. "I watch film every day and I just try to learn my role better because I think you should never stop trying to improve as a player no matter who you are."

Gillam and his fellow freshmen on defense have impressed CU's upperclassmen. In addition to Gillam, defensive backs Tedric Thompson and Chidobe Awuzie and linebacker Kenneth Olujobode have seen duty either on the defensive unit or on special teams.

Senior defensive end Chidera Uzo-Diribe said the first-year players "have shown that they can physically handle playing Pac-12 football. Mentally, they know what to do, their assignments, and their checks and reads. The freshmen have been doing a really good job.

"If you are expected to play as a freshman, then it's for a reason. You've shown that you can handle the mental load and the physical load. You expect them to play well."

But Uzo-Diribe admits Gillam might have exceeded most expectations. "He is probably one of the best players I have seen coming out of high school," Uzo-Diribe said. "To come out here, fly around the field and to make the plays that he does – he is a really good player. He knows what he is doing out there. He doesn't play like a freshman or think like one."

Coming out of high school, recruiters from around the country were reluctant to offer Gillam a scholarship because many felt he wasn't fast enough. But, after chasing down speedy Oregon quarterback and Heisman Trophy candidate Marcus Mariota from behind last Saturday, it seems that those doubts have been unfounded.

“That’s the great thing about camps for players like Addison,” said MacIntyre. “You never know for sure unless you see him play in person and that’s why camps are so big. Film doesn’t lie but it doesn’t tell all the truth. That’s always my answer. If we like (a player) on film then we better make sure of every detail that we’re looking for. That’s why we love to have the young men come to camp.”

NOTABLE: Defensive tackle Justin Solis suffered an ankle sprain in the first half in Saturday’s loss to Oregon and did not return. Although he remains questionable for this Saturday’s game at Arizona State (8 p.m. MDT, Pac-12 Network), MacIntyre told the media on Wednesday that Solis has felt a lot better since and he is hopeful that Solis will be able to play. MacIntyre is preparing defensive linemen Tyler Henington, Nate Bonsu and Kirk Poston to play more snaps if Solis can’t go MacIntyre thinks that preparing for the speed of Oregon last week will help the team in their preparation for the speed of Arizona State this week. Both teams play similar up-tempo styles of offenses and CU’s defense has practiced for that same kind of speed for the last two weeks. The team will practice again on Thursday morning and leave for Tempe, Ariz., on Friday morning.

Colorado Buffaloes Football

Show Menu



Devil of a challenge for Buffs

By John Henderson *The Denver Post* *The Denver Post*
Posted:

DenverPost.com

BOULDER — That wind you hear coming up from the Phoenix area isn't the Arizona State football team breathing a sigh of relief. Sure, it could be misconstrued as such with Colorado coming to town Saturday. In actuality, it's the Sun Devils hyperventilating about showing the Buffaloes what they have learned after one of the most brutal four-game stretches in school history.

Arizona State (3-2, 1-1 Pac-12) just finished a month in which it defeated defending Big Ten champion Wisconsin 32-30, lost to defending Pac-12 champion Stanford 42-28, sent Southern California coach Lane Kiffin packing with a 62-41 win and lost 37-34 to last season's national runner-up, Notre Dame, on a neutral field Saturday.

Now here comes Colorado (2-2, 0-2), a 25-point underdog.

Not that the crowd is looking at this 8 p.m. MDT game as a feast, but Sun Devil Stadium will be serving buffalo burgers.

"We've learned a lot about our football team," ASU coach Todd Graham said this week on the Pac-12 coaches call. "Where we're strong, where we need work. I know this: I have great belief in this football team. That schedule is going to help us down the stretch in the Pac-12."

With 16th-ranked Washington (4-1, 1-1) coming to ASU the following week, the Buffs could represent the classic trap game.

Don't count on it.

The Sun Devils have plenty of areas to improve, starting on defense.

Arizona State led the nation in tackles for lost yardage (averaging 9.0 per game) and finished second in sacks (4.0) last year but is tied for 74th (5.6) and tied for 96th (1.4) this year in those same categories.

USC gashed the Sun Devils for 542 yards, and Notre Dame gained 424. ASU's defensive star, All-America tackle Will Sutton, has been neutralized. After recording 23½ tackles for lost yardage and 16 sacks a year ago, he has only 2½ and one this season.

"Some of the teams that they've played have run away from him some," CU coach Mike MacIntyre said. "Then some of the teams, it's been such a scoringfest that it's just been basically a passing game, and when you pass rush, it's kind of like a wrestler — you get worn out so he has to get substituted in for."

Offensively, CU will face Oregon Light. Graham's hurry-up, spread attack has destroyed some of the best defenses in the country. Junior quarterback Taylor Kelly ranks fourth

nationally with an average of 372.2 yards passing per game. He has completed 63 percent of his passes while throwing for 14 touchdowns and five interceptions.

Senior tailback Marion Grice leads the nation in scoring with 13 touchdowns. He has scored 19 touchdowns in his past eight games.

Graham found a new threat in sophomore Jaelen Strong, a Philadelphia product via Los Angeles' Pierce College. He's ninth nationally with an average of 7.8 catches per game and 15th with 113.8 yards receiving per game.

"He's been phenomenal," Graham said. "He's going to get a whole bunch better. He's just getting started."

Footnote. CU's home game Oct. 19 against Charleston Southern will start at noon.

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Colorado football: Chances will come for Buffs' tight ends to contribute

By Kyle Ringo Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera
Posted:

Buffzone.com

In the wake of two consecutive losses and a serious downturn in production, Colorado football coaches and players are trying to get their passing game back on track this week.

Part of that effort is deciding how much the tight ends will factor into this week's game at Arizona State.

CU hasn't had a lot of production from tight ends Kyle Slavin and Scott Fernandez so far this season. They have combined for six catches for 44 yards and zero touchdowns in the first four games.

Tight ends coach Klayton Adams said while tight ends haven't made a big impact statistically to this point this fall, he is happy with the consistent effort and execution he is getting from Slavin and Fernandez. He said both players will continue to have chances to make plays.

"It's just a matter of how you're trying to attack the opponent," Adams said. "I think the guys who are playing are doing a really good job. I think they have been incredibly consistent."

There was relatively little depth and experience on the roster at tight end when the season began because of offseason attrition, some of which was expected and some not.

CU's top three tight ends in 2012 combined to catch 55 passes. Nick Kasa led the way catching 25 passes for 391 yards and three scores. Slavin is the only one of those three players still on the roster. Kasa is in the NFL with the Oakland Raiders and Vincent Hobbs transferred. Redshirt freshman Austin Ray also left the program in the summer.

Colorado hasn't had a tight end catch more than 25 passes in a season since 2009 when Riar Geer finished third on the team in receiving with 36 catches for 402 yards.

Adams said that streak won't continue for long. He said tight ends were a prominent part of the offense the CU staff brought with them from San Jose State and they will be again at times this year and in the future.

"I think we've got to continue to improve and be in the right spots when we have those opportunities," Adams said. "I think they are doing those things and the quarterbacks are doing things the way they're supposed to and reading the right stuff. So it will click and when it does, you will see more of an even-type deal on that."

Redshirt freshman Sean Irwin caught the first pass of his career last week against Oregon and should begin to see more playing time and opportunities as the season progresses. To this point, Slavin and Fernandez have been alternating each series at tight end.

Slavin had hand surgery before the season after suffering an injury early in fall camp in August. He said he is 100 percent recovered from the injury and it hasn't affected him.

Slavin said each week is different in terms of how much the tight ends are included in the game plan, but he says there are always opportunities each week for him and the other tight ends to catch the ball and make plays.

"Obviously we haven't got the balls and numbers and stuff, but that's a few missed reads and that's me not getting open on certain stuff," Slavin said. "It's a combination of things."

Adams said it has been a bit unusual through the first four games that CU hasn't had many red zone opportunities and that it has been scoring touchdowns mostly on explosion plays. He said tight ends are generally a more prominent part of the offense in the red zone and as the Buffs get more red zone opportunities, the tight ends will likely have more chances to make their mark.

"We probably had three or four opportunities in the Oregon State game where for whatever reason it just didn't work out," Adams said. "Maybe it was a ball batted down or sometimes on certain day some things happen."

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Colorado football: DT Josh Tupou questionable for ASU game

By Kyle Ringo Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

The Colorado defense will face its third straight powerhouse offense this week at Arizona State and it could be without the anchor to its defensive line.

Sophomore defensive tackle Josh Tupou is questionable with a sprained ankle.

Coach Mike MacIntyre said Tupou felt better Wednesday and he will travel to the desert where his participation likely will be a game-time decision.

If Tupou is not able to play, coaches will turn to Justin Solis, Tyler Henington and Kirk Poston to fill the void. Solis and Henington are defensive tackles who have played more than 100 fewer snaps than Tupou so far this season. However, Solis actually has more total tackles and tackles for loss than Tupou.

"He's played pretty well that last couple games," MacIntyre said of Solis. "He's made some plays."

Solis weighed 326 pounds at one point last winter. He is down to 300 this season and says he's playing faster and able to move quicker on top of his stamina increasing dramatically.

"Even though I'm behind Josh, I always prepare like I could play every snap of the game and like I could start," Solis said. "I always have that mentality. So I'm ready. I'm looking forward to it. If Josh can't go, I'm ready to step up."

Coaches have moved Poston, a 6-foot-1, 255-pound junior, inside this week for depth and because he can be a tricky pass rusher at times in the right matchups. He had four sacks last season, which was second most on the team.

"He's looked good in there," MacIntyre said. "He's quick. I think he'll be good in there when we do some movement-type things. It would be hard for him to play 35-40 plays if they're doubling him and all that because he's not big enough."

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Colorado football: Buffs face scoring sensation

By Kyle Ringo Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

Colorado will face the nation's leading scorer this week in Arizona State running back Marion Grice, who is averaging 15.6 points per game with 13 touchdowns to his credit already this fall.

"I just hope we can tackle Grice better than everyone else can," CU coach Mike MacIntyre said.

Grice is the Sun Devils' leading rusher with 307 yards through five games. He has scored eight rushing touchdowns and five receiving. He also is ASU's primary kickoff return man.

Grice torched the Buffs last season with five catches for 101 yards and three touchdowns in a 51-17 beat down in Boulder.

Notable

Running back Terrence Crowder and defensive lineman Samson Kafovalu are practicing with the team once again after off-the-field issues sidelined each. MacIntyre said both are still trying to earn back a good standing with him and they have work to do to get there. ... CU's game against Charleston Southern on Oct. 19 will kick off at noon and be televised on the Pac-12 Network. The Buffs are playing the FCS school as a make-up game after their home game against Fresno State was canceled due to the flooding in Boulder last month.

Contact staff writer Kyle Ringo at ringok@dailycamera.com or twitter.com/kyleringo.



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Colorado (2-2) at Arizona State (3-2) (ET)

By Sports Network
The Sports Network

FACTS & STATS: Site: Sun Devil Stadium (71,706) -- Tempe, Arizona. Television: Pac-12 Network. Home Record: Colorado 1-1, ASU 3-0. Away Record: Colorado 0-1, ASU 0-1. Neutral Record: Colorado 1-0, ASU 0-1. Conference Record: Colorado 0-2, ASU 1-1. Series Record: ASU leads, 4-0.

GAME NOTES: In a Pac-12 matchup at Sun Devil Stadium the Arizona State Sun Devils will attempt to bounce back from a difficult loss when they host the Colorado Buffaloes, who are in search of their first conference win.

The first two games in league play for the Buffaloes have not gone especially well. In losses to both Oregon State and Oregon, Colorado has been outscored by a combined 101-33. Prior to entering the league schedule the Buffaloes had actually found some success with wins in their first two games.

As for Arizona State, it dropped out of the national rankings this week after a heartbreaking, 37-34, setback against Notre Dame in Arlington. With the loss the Sun Devils fell to 3-2 overall. In terms of league play, Arizona State has split its first two contests with a loss at Stanford (42-28) and a win over USC (62-41).

These teams have met four previous times, all within the last decade. Arizona State has been victorious in all four of those meetings, including a 51-17 rout in Boulder last season.

Under first-year head coach Mike MacIntyre Colorado has developed into a healthy offensive squad. The Buffaloes are posting just over 400 yards of total offense each week, while scoring 28 points per game. Though not ranked in the upper echelon of the conference, those numbers are respectable.

Connor Wood is the man under center but his uneven play has kept the Buffaloes from improving even more. Though he has thrown for 1,092 yards and eight touchdowns, he has completed just 54.4 percent of his pass attempts and has been intercepted six times. His season-long streak without an interception is just 22 passes.

Thankfully when Wood is able to complete passes the Buffaloes generally get a great deal of production. Paul Richardson (31 receptions, 621 yards, five TDs) has been eating up opposing secondaries and is currently second in the Pac-12 in receiving yards. Nelson Spruce (16 receptions, 206 yards, TD) is more of a possession receiver to complement Richardson's big-play ability.

Colorado has been much more of a passing team under MacIntyre, with only 441 total rushing yards on the campaign. Christian Powell (51 carries, 163 yards) and Michael Adkins (20 carries, 116 yards) have been the most productive backs, though each is still searching for the first rushing touchdown of the season for Colorado.

There was not much that Colorado could take away from its loss to Oregon that was positive. The Buffaloes were gashed for 755 yards of total offense, which was the second most ever surrendered by the program in a single game. Overall Colorado has been letting up 482.5 yards per game, which ranks above only California in the conference.

Addison Gillam (51 tackles, 2.0 sacks) is the team-leader in tackles, while Chidera Uzo-Diribe (6.0 TFL) is an important contributor up front.

Versatile is the word that best describes the Sun Devils on offense. From dual-threat quarterback Taylor Kelly to the stable of running backs that make as many plays through the air as on the ground, Arizona State is a tough team to stop, or even slow down.

Under center Kelly gets a lot of attention. He has thrown for 1,732 yards and 14 touchdowns already, completing 63.3 percent of his pass attempts. Although he has been intercepted six times, Kelly is still the third most prolific

passer in the Pac-12. Kelly has the ability to make plays with his legs as well, but has been limited to just 129 yards rushing so far.

There are a litany of skill position players making an impact for the Sun Devils. All running back Marion Grice seems to do is score touchdowns. Grice, who leads the team in rushing and has more than 100 touches on the campaign, has scored a Pac-12 leading 13 touchdowns (eight rushing, five receiving) already. Fellow running back D.J. Foster (31 receptions, 329 yards, TD) hasn't been much of a factor in the running game but is second on the team in receptions and yards.

Jaalen Strong (39 receptions, 569 yards, three TDs) is putting on a clinic at wide receiver this year. Strong is third in the conference in receptions as well as receiving yards. Tight end Chris Coyle (13 receptions, 224 yards, two TDs) hasn't put up huge numbers yet, but is a reliable contributor.

Generally the offenses's brisk pace has taken a toll on the Sun Devils defensively. Arizona State is allowing teams to score an even 30 points per game, while ranking eighth in the conference in total defense (393.0 ypg). The Sun Devils have just seven sacks, but 11 forced turnovers rank third in the league. Alden Darby (27 tackles, two INTs) and Osahon Irabor (23 tackles, 4.5 TFL, two INTs) have each made an impact in that regard.

It is clear that Colorado has taken a step forward offensively. However, Arizona State has the type of offense that the Buffaloes are still trying to emulate. The multiple weapons Arizona State has will allow it to blow past Colorado and get back in the win column.

Sports Network Predicted Outcome: Arizona State 45, Colorado 20

Game Date and Time

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