



By: CUBuffs.com

Jered Bell returns an interception against Arizona Saturday.

Brooks: Wildcats Run Roughshod Over Buffaloes

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By: B.G. Brooks, Contributing Editor

BOULDER – Colorado's hopes of exiting October with a statement win in the Pac-12 Conference were flattened Saturday night by Arizona's potent ground game. The Wildcats - specifically their quarterback - ran and ran some more, and the Buffs had no place to hide.

Behind a career-high 192 yards rushing by QB B.J. Denker and another 119 by tailback Ka'Deem Carey, low by his standards, the Wildcats waltzed to a 44-20 win at Folsom Field.

Arizona (5-2, 2-2) amassed 670 yards in total offense – the third most in school history – with 405 of it on the ground. CU (3-4, 0-4) dropped a game below .500 and left its homefield still looking for its first conference win of the Mike MacIntyre Era.

"We just have to keep fighting and keep moving forward," a disconcerted MacIntyre said. "It's disheartening for the kids. They're battling and just (short) a few plays here and there."

The Buffs open November with a pair of difficult road games – at UCLA next weekend (5:30 p.m. MDT, Pac-12 Networks), followed by a trip to Seattle to play Washington on Nov. 9.

Denker, a senior who debuted as Arizona's starter last season against CU, also completed 21 of 32 passes for 265 yards and a touchdown, giving him 457 yards in total offense – the sixth-highest output in school history. His 192 yards rushing is believed to be a school record for a QB.

"We couldn't tackle the quarterback . . . we must have missed him seven times. Probably 200 yards of offense off of missed tackles on the quarterback," MacIntyre said. He also said Denker "threw the ball better than I've ever seen him throw in every game I've watched him play . . . he came through, he did a great job."

Arizona coach Rich Rodriguez said Denker's performance "was big . . . they were loading the box to stop Ka'Deem and were going to have to take the ball up high. Obviously, B.J. running was a key."

"I think we just weren't keyed in to some of our responsibilities," said CU defensive end Chidera Uzo-Diribe of Denker's performance. "It was a big thing to make sure we don't get him running, but obviously we allowed him to run."

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Carey, a junior who rushed for a conference record 366 yards last November in a 56-31 rout of the Buffs, scored four touchdowns Saturday night, giving him nine against CU in their last two meetings. He entered the night as the nation's leading rusher, but his 119 yards were 42 below his average (161.0).

"We stopped Carey pretty good," MacIntyre said. "He ran over us a few times, but he's going to do that against everybody."

Carey had a long run of 30 yards, but Denker's long jaunt of 54 was a career-best, and Carey's backup – Daniel Jenkins – had a 56-yarder en route to a nine-carry, 87-yard performance.

Slowing Carey was of little solace to MacIntyre, who said he was "very concerned" about his defense. "We played as hard as we can play. We just have to keep coaching them . . . there's some good offenses in this league."

CU freshman quarterback Sefo Liufau, making his first Pac-12 start, finished 17-for-32 for 212 yards and a 75-yard touchdown to Paul Richardson, who made seven catches for 132 yards. The Buffs managed 349 yards in total offense, 137 of them on the ground.

MacIntyre said Liufau "missed a couple of guys he could have hit (but) I thought he did some good things. He has to keep improving."

Buffs placekicker Will Oliver kicked a pair of field goals, including a career-best 53-yarder. Oliver said his long kick "was the worst kick of the three . . . it's always good to break PRs, but I missed the 52 (yarder), so it kind of takes away from it. It still feels good; I'm glad they trust me."

But on this night, with the Wildcats running free and largely unchallenged, the Buffs needed sixes rather than threes against an opponent their coach believed they could not only compete against but defeat.

"We should have won the game," MacIntyre said.

Indeed, the Buffs played the Wildcats toe-to-toe through the game's first 27 1/2 minutes, even taking a 13-10 lead on Liufau's 75-yard TD pass to Richardson and a pair of Oliver field goals that were set up by Arizona turnovers.

CU linebacker Woodson Greer recovered an Arizona fumble that led to Oliver's 53-yard field goal – a career long – and tied the score at 10-10 with 14:50 left in the second quarter. Just under 5 minutes later, after Oliver was wide left on a 52-yard attempt, Denker was intercepted by Buffs safety Jered Bell, who returned the pick 26 yards to the Wildcats 49.

Seven plays later, CU had to settle for another Oliver field goal – this one a 48-yarder that pushed the Buffs in front for the first time, 13-10, with 5:07 left before halftime.

But the first half ended with CU failing to finish what had been a promising start and setting a disastrous tone for the second half.

Allowing the Wildcats two touchdowns in the first half's final 2:28, the Buffs found themselves trailing 24-13 at intermission. Arizona got the first of those two scores on a 7-yard run by Carey, capping a nine-play, 75-yard march. Then, after Arizona's defense forced a CU three-and-out, Carey ran 30 yards and Denker connected with slot receiver Nate Phillips, who got a step on Bell, for a 44-yard TD pass.

Those two late TDs were the Wildcats' lone hints of offense after they had marched 88 yards on their opening possession and taken a 7-0 lead on Carey's 1-yard dive – the 14th play of the drive.

CU tied the score on the long Liufau-Richardson scoring pass, then Jake Smith's 37-yard field goal sent Arizona up 10-7 with 4:34 left in the first quarter. From then until their surge to end the half, the Wildcats were relatively tame – but the Buffs couldn't take advantage.

Arizona ended the first half with a season-high 361 yards in total offense (210 rushing, 151 passing). Meanwhile, CU mustered 189 and converted only four of 11 third-down attempts. After rushing for just nine yards in the first quarter, the Buffs finished the half with 42. Carey's first half work: 97 yards on 17 carries and two TDs. Denker added 44 yards on seven rushes but was just discovering his stride.

Needing a defensive stop to open the second half, the Buffs got a partial stop. Three plays – two of them runs by Denker that netted 65 yards – put the Wildcats inside the Buffs' 10 with first-and-goal. But CU held Arizona to a field goal – a 26-yarder by Smith – then responded with its own 75-yard

drive (nine plays) and pulled to within seven (27-20) on Michael Adkins II's 1-yard plunge and Oliver's PAT.

Back came the Wildcats . . . Carey scored his third TD of the night – another 1-yard dive – and Smith kicked Arizona ahead again by two touchdowns (34-20) with 7:55 left in the third quarter.

Back came the Buffs . . . just not far enough. Liufau, with the help of a personal foul (facemask) on Arizona cornerback Jonathan McKnight that nullified an interception, drove CU to the Arizona 4-yard line but no further. Liufau's fourth-down pass to the end zone fell incomplete.

"The coaches have the best interest and know what's best for the team," Liufau said of the fourth-down gamble. "You never question the coach; you know, if they want to go for a field goal, onside kick, whatever the call may be. I think it was a great decision."

After it was made, just over 3 minutes later, the fourth quarter began with the Buffs still trailing by 14 points.

And the end was beginning . . . CU attempted a fake punt at its own 15-yard line, with punter Darragh O'Neill trying to skirt left end but being hammered after a 3-yard gain to the 18. Carey needed two runs to cover that distance, scoring his fourth TD on a 6-yard run up the middle.

MacIntyre defended the fake punt call "because if you saw us playing defense, we couldn't stop them and I thought it was a good place to try . . . he (O'Neill) was supposed to read it. We've had five on this year and we've punted all five. We thought we had a chance, he thought he had a chance and we didn't get it."

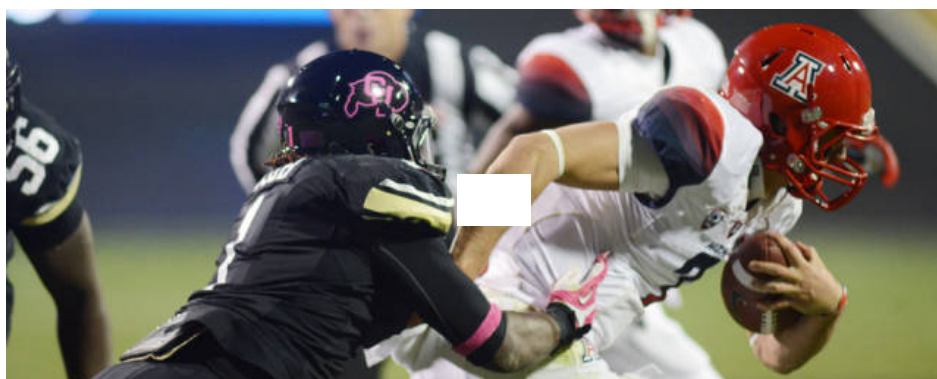
After Smith's extra point the Wildcats were cruising, 41-20, with 14:30 remaining. He added a 28-yard field goal to make it 44-20 with 9:10 to play, and Arizona needed no more points to put this one away.

Contact: BG.Brooks@Colorado.EDU

Colorado Buffaloes Football

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By: Associated Press

Derrick Webb tries to pull in Arizona quarterback B.J. Denker.



Buffaloes Bottle Up Carey, But Door Opens For Denker

Release: October 27, 2013

By: Josh Casey, Graduate Assistant SID

BOULDER—All week the Buffs' defense prepared themselves for the monumental task of slowing down explosive Arizona running back Ka'Deem Carey. In the end they did slow down Carey, but instead of wilting without the usual production from their number one offensive weapon, the Wildcats simply found other ways to move the ball against an overwhelmed CU defense.

"We stopped Carey pretty good," said head coach Mike MacIntyre. "Just disappointed we didn't do a better job against (quarterback, B.J.) Denker. He did a good job. He threw the ball better than I've ever seen him throw in every game I've ever watched him play. So he really came through."

Last year Carey rushed for a Pac-12 record 366 yards against CU and the talk all week centered around avoiding a repeat of such a performance. And in that aspect the Buffs defense played a whale of a game in limiting the running back to his season-low in rushing yardage. But, for all Carey couldn't accomplish, Denker more than made up for both on the ground and through the air. Denker rushed for 192 yards and threw for 265 more in what may have been finest performance of his career.

"I think we've improved from the film I watched last year," said MacIntyre. "(Denker) made us miss tonight. I've seen him make people miss before. It's just very frustrating for our kids."

Despite the impressive performance put on by Denker and the Arizona offense, it took the Wildcats nearly three quarters to pull away from a feisty Buffaloes team that nearly matched their opponents step for step. CU stayed within seven points until midway through the third quarter but they never could get that key defensive stop that might've given the offense the kind of opening it needed.

"There was probably 200 yards of offense off of missed tackles on the quarterback," said MacIntyre. "We played our hearts out; we've got to play better."

The performance, which also included two forced Arizona turnovers, did have its occasional bright spots but when the night was over MacIntyre and his staff was left with many more questions than answers.

"We just need to keep working on it," he said. "We've made personnel changes there. We just have to keep working, keep fighting, keep pushing and find ways to keep trying to help them. I thought we did a few things tonight and they (Arizona) just made more plays than we did."

The task only gets tougher in the coming weeks as the team prepares for road trips to UCLA and Washington, teams loaded with the same kind of offensive talent that has given the Buffs fits all season.

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“It’s very disconcerting,” said MacIntyre. “We keep improving we just got continue to do that. They’re battling out there. We need to do a better job of coaching them because there are great offenses in this league.”

Colorado Buffaloes Football

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Colorado football: Buffs fall to Arizona on homecoming

By Kyle Ringo Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

Colorado coach Mike MacIntyre slid into his seat behind a microphone minutes after his team lost its 12th consecutive Pac-12 Conference game Saturday night and told reporters he would answer only three questions.

He began to answer the first even before the reporter had fully finished asking it. He was fired up and emotional after watching his defense miss tackles and allow nearly 700 yards of total offense to Arizona in a 44-20 loss.

Despite the numbers and the score, MacIntyre said his team should have won the game but didn't because of poor execution.

But that wasn't the whole story.

The Buffs were competitive and trailed by only 14 points late in the third quarter when MacIntyre made several questionable decisions that might have cost his team a chance at a come-from-behind win.

CU drove to the Arizona 4-yard line but turned the ball over on downs when quarterback Sefo Liufau threw incomplete out of the back of the end zone on fourth down. Some fans surely wondered why MacIntyre didn't kick a field goal and cut the lead to 11 points with a full quarter remaining.

After the CU defense forced an Arizona punt on the next possession, the Buffs' offense stalled deep in its own end. MacIntyre called a fake punt from his 17-yard line and punter Darragh O'Neill gained only one yard, giving the Wildcats the ball at the CU 18.

This is the explanation he gave for that decision

"Because if you see us playing defense, we couldn't stop them," MacIntyre said. "I thought it was a good place to try it. He was supposed to read it. We've had five on this year and he's punted all five. I thought we had a chance, and he thought he had a chance and didn't get it."

Arizona running back Ka'Deem Carey scored his fourth touchdown of the night two plays later to go up three scores against the demoralized Buffs. CU has now lost 12 straight Pac-12 games.

Carey has scored in nine consecutive quarters against the Buffs. He has also scored 11 of his 42 career touchdowns against CU.

A year after setting the single-game rushing record against the Buffs in Tucson, Carey ran 23 times for 119 yards. It was quarterback B.J. Denker who really killed the Buffs this year.

Denker found huge chunks of yardage calling his name on read-option plays and ran 15 times for 192 yards as the Wildcats gobbled up nearly 700 yards of total offense.

"We couldn't tackle the quarterback," MacIntyre said. "We must have missed him seven times, probably 200 yards of offense off of missed tackles on the quarterback. We have to work on tackling better."

The Buffs missed a chance to produce the 300th victory in the history of Folsom Field on a crisp homecoming night. It was also the 300th game in MacIntyre's coaching career at all levels of the sport.

Like so many other home games in recent years, the bulk of the fourth quarter was played in a mostly empty stadium. CU reported 38,679 attended the blackout game.

It is the third time in four home games CU has fallen short of the 40,000-mark in attendance. Prior to this season, the Buffs hadn't played in front of less than 40,000 fans at Folsom Field since 1988.

The Arizona offense started strong with a 14-play drive on its first possession of the game, taking a 7-0 lead on a 1-yard touchdown run by Carey, the nation's leading rusher.

CU answered abruptly when quarterback Sefo Liufau lofted a ball into the arms of wide receiver Paul Richardson, who beat cornerback Jonathan McKnight for a 75-yard touchdown pass. It was the 12th catch of 50 or more yards in Richardson's career.

Richardson later left the game with an ankle injury. He is day-to-day.

Arizona put together another long drive on its next possession, but CU managed to force the Wildcats to settle for a 37-yard field goal from Jake Smith to take a 10-7 lead.

Colorado drove into Arizona territory five times in the first half but came away with only six points on those drives from two long Will Oliver field goals, including a career best 53-yard kick through the uprights on the south end of the stadium. Oliver also missed a 52-yard attempt wide left.

The CU defense stopped Arizona on four straight series at one point in the first half, including two possessions that ended with linebacker Woodson Greer recovering a fumble and an interception by safety Jered Bell.

That helped CU grab a 13-10 lead, but Arizona recaptured the lead with less than 3 minutes remaining on a 7-yard run by Carey. The touchdown was set up by a 22-yard pass from B.J. Denker to Terrence Miller that was challenged by MacIntyre.

It appeared Miller didn't get a foot down inbound with possession but the replay official confirmed the call on the field.

The CU offense responded with a three-and-out and gave the ball back to the Wildcats with 1 minute, 17 seconds remaining in the half. Arizona didn't need nearly that much time to get back to the end zone.

Carey found some running room and gained 30 yards on the first play and Denker connected with Nate Phillips on a 56-yard touchdown pass on the next play. Phillips beat Bell on the play and suddenly the Wildcats were ahead by double digits.

The Buffs trimmed back to seven in the third quarter and might have been able to do so again in the fourth, but it seemed like MacIntyre became impatient and tried to force the issue.

MacIntyre said he had no regrets after the game.

"We played our hearts out, we've got to play better," he said.

Contact staff writer

Kyle Ringo at

ringok@dailycamera.com

or twitter.com/kyleringo.

Arizona 44, Colorado 20

Arizona 10 14 10 10--44

Colorado 7 6 7 0--20

First Quarter

Ari -- Carey 1 run (J.Smith kick), 7:55.

Col -- Richardson 75 pass from Liufau (Oliver kick), 7:42.

Ari -- FG J.Smith 37, 4:34.

Second Quarter

Col -- FG Oliver 53, 14:50.

Col -- FG Oliver 48, 5:12.

Ari -- Carey 7 run (J.Smith kick), 2:28.

Ari -- Phillips 44 pass from Denker (J.Smith kick), :50.

Third Quarter

Ari -- FG J.Smith 26, 13:25.

Col -- Adkins 1 run (Oliver kick), 9:53.

Ari -- Carey 1 run (J.Smith kick), 7:55.

Fourth Quarter

Ari -- Carey 6 run (J.Smith kick), 14:30.

Ari--FG J.Smith 28, 9:10.

A -- 38,679.

Ari Col

First downs 26 19

Rushes-yards 50-405 42-137

Passing 265 212

Comp-Att-Int 21-32-1 17-33-1

Return Yards 19 26

Punts-Avg. 4-37.0 5-38.6

Fumbles-Lost 2-1 0-0

Penalties-Yards 5-69 2-20

Time of Possession 29:29 30:31

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING -- Arizona, Denker 15-192, Carey 23-119, Jenkins 9-87, Baker 3-7. Colorado, Adkins 16-54, Powell 13-35, Liufau 8-33, T.Jones 4-14, O'Neill 1-1.

PASSING -- Arizona, Denker 21-32-1-265. Colorado, Liufau 17-32-1-212, Richardson 0-1-0-0.

RECEIVING -- Arizona, Grant 6-41, Phillips 4-69, T.Miller 3-69, Richards 3-50, Carey 3-12, Wharton 2-24. Colorado, Richardson 7-132, Spruce 3-28, Goodson 2-27, Fernandez 2-12, T.Jones 2-7, Adkins 1-6.

Howell: Questionable decisions bury Buffs

By Brian Howell Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

Two decisions. Ten-point swing. Ballgame.

In Saturday's 44-20 loss to Arizona, the Colorado football team couldn't tackle Arizona quarterback B.J. Denker, got run over a few times by Wildcats running back Ka'Deem Carey and struggled with its own running game again.

Yet, it was two botched coaching decisions in the final 18-plus minutes that ended the Buffs' hopes of winning this one.

With a little more than 18 minutes to play, CU trailed 34-20. That's a sizeable hole from which to dig, but with 18 minutes to play, making up 14 points certainly isn't impossible. Especially with one of the most accurate kickers in CU history standing on the sidelines and a middle-of-the-pack opponent on the other side of the field.

So, facing fourth-and-goal at the Arizona 4, head coach Mike MacIntyre elected to go for a touchdown instead of putting a nearly automatic three points on the board with a Will Oliver field goal.

"Take the chance. See us try to play to defense. Next question," an unusually agitated MacIntyre said about why he elected to go for the touchdown.

True freshman quarterback Sefo Liufau dropped back to pass, had plenty of time, but nobody open. He scrambled, no longer had ample time and tossed the ball out of the back of the end zone.

"No," MacIntyre said when asked if he regretted the decision to go for it. "The guy was open. We had the chance. We just couldn't get it to him."

Had the Buffs actually made it work and scored the touchdown, it would have made a dramatic difference heading into the final 18 minutes and MacIntyre would have looked pretty smart.

Yet, with a team that has now lost 12 consecutive conference games, MacIntyre should have taken the sure points and given his team a chance.

But that wasn't the back-breaker.

The Buffs still trailed 34-20 when, on the first play of the fourth quarter, they faced fourth-and-5 at their own 17.

MacIntyre sent punter Darragh O'Neill out to the field. Standing within spitting distance of his own end zone, O'Neill didn't punt, though. Instead, he took off running on the fake.

The Buffs needed 5 yards. They got 1. O'Neill got drilled. And Arizona's offense took over at the CU 18.

"Because if you see us playing defense, we couldn't stop them," MacIntyre said, despite the fact that his defense did force a punt on Arizona's previous possession. "I thought it was a good place to try it. (O'Neill) was supposed to read it. I thought we had a chance, and he thought he had a chance and didn't get it."

Two plays later, Carey waltzed into the end zone for the 10th time in his career against the Buffs.

Game over.

"No. Do not," MacIntyre abruptly said when asked if he regretted trying the fake punt.

He should have regretted both calls, because instead of trailing by 11, and having a puncher's chance in the fourth quarter, those two decisions put the Buffs in an insurmountable 41-20 hole going into the final 14:30.

Maybe CU would've lost anyway, but we'll never know, because they were out of reach too early.

In a conference that offers CU so few chances at victory, this one stung. MacIntyre's demeanor during the postgame press conference was out of character. This loss clearly bothered him more than others.

"Definitely. One-hundred percent," he said.

Why?

"Because we can beat that team," he said.

Change a couple of decisions, and the Buffs might have.

Contact staff writer Brian Howell at howellb@dailycamera.com or twitter.com/BrianHowell33.

Colorado football: Buffs have a little more success slowing Carey

By Brian Howell Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

Ka'Deem Carey's final statistics on Saturday were pretty good. But, considering what the Arizona tailback did to Colorado a year ago, it wasn't too bad.

Carey finished with 119 yards and four touchdowns in Arizona's 44-20 victory at Folsom Field.

All week, Carey was the focus after what he did against CU a year ago. He had a Pac-12 record single-game record 366 yards and five touchdowns, on only 25 carries, in a 56-31 win in Tucson, Ariz., on Nov. 10, 2012.

On Saturday, Carey needed 23 carries to get his yards, and 30 of his yards came on one carry.

"We stopped Carey pretty good," CU head coach Mike MacIntyre said. "We had one he bounced outside and we should have stayed outside and he wouldn't have gained (those 30 yards), then he ran over us a few times. He's going to do that. He does that against everybody."

CU defensive end Chidera Uzo-Diribe said the Buffs didn't scheme its defense to stop Carey, but made him a focus of their attention.

"We were playing just our normal defense," he said. "We just made it a key to make sure that you tackle (Carey). He's good at breaking tackles. That was our big thing."

Oliver nets career best

CU kicker Will Oliver booted a career-long 53-yard field goal in the first half. His previous best was 52.

"It felt really good," said Oliver, who also missed a 52-yarder in the first half. "It's a great career accomplishment to come out here and do that. I felt I hit both right on the money, and I just sent the one (52-yarder) a little bit wide left."

Oliver went 2-for-3 on the night. He is 11-for-13 on the season and 28-for-37 in his career. His success rate of 75.7 percent is the best in CU history among kickers that have nailed 20 or more field goals.

Bell nets third INT

CU safety Jered Bell had his third interception of the season. The Buffs had just three as a team in 2012.

"I'm just doing what the coaches ask me -- just doing the right technique, going back to the fundamentals and just being in the right position whenever I need to be," he said.

Crain in attendance

Tampa Bay Rays pitcher Jesse Crain, who graduated from Fairview High School, attended Saturday's game.

"I grew up coming to the games back in the late 80s and early 90s when we were going to national championships and winning all those games," said Crain, who recently completed his 10th major league season. "I came to all the games growing up and I've always been a big fan of the Colorado Buffaloes."

Former CU athletic director Mike Bohn also made a brief appearance in the press box.

Notable

Parker Orms led the Buffs with 14 tackles, all unassisted. Bell had 10. ... Ryan Severson had a season-long 48-yard kickoff return in the second half. ... Defensive lineman Samson Kafovalu returned after a suspension for violating assorted team rules. ... CU is 61-33-5 in homecoming games, with six consecutive losses. ... The Buffs are still seeking their 300th win at Folsom Field, falling to 299-159-10. ... CU is 0-7 on the coin toss this year.

Contact staff writer

Brian Howell at

howellb@dailycamera.com

or twitter.com/BrianHowell33.

Colorado Buffaloes fall in homecoming game to Arizona Wildcats

By John Henderson *The Denver Post* *The Denver Post*

Posted:

DenverPost.com

BOULDER — Colorado doesn't need the nation's leading rusher from Arizona to cut its rebuilding project at the hinges. Arizona quarterbacks can do the same thing. B.J. Denker may have been the lowest-rated passer in the Pac-12, but his legs were first rate Saturday night.

The senior rushed for 192 yards in Arizona's 670-yard explosion that buried Colorado 44-20 at Folsom Field.

A paltry homecoming crowd of 38,679 showed up on a cold, clear night to watch the possibility of a first-year program come of age against a team picked fourth in the Pac-12 South. That failure, coming on the back of three other conference thrashings, registered in every syllable of CU coach Mike MacIntyre's clipped, terse remarks.

"We can beat that team," an obviously perturbed MacIntyre said. "We didn't tackle. We couldn't tackle the quarterback. We must've missed him seven times. They got 200 yards of offense off missed tackles on the quarterback."

Colorado's plan was simple. Stop Ka'Deem Carey, who led the nation in rushing (averaging 160.2 yards per game), and learn from giving up a conference-record 366 yards to him the year before.

Carey got his yards, all right. He gained 119 and scored four touchdowns, but it was the speedy Denker who embarrassed the Buffaloes (3-4, 0-4 Pac-12). MacIntyre has turned the future of his offense to true freshmen in quarterback Sefo Liufau and tailback Michael Adkins II.

But the Colorado defense's baby steps aren't going anywhere fast. Arizona (5-2, 2-2) is the fourth Pac-12 opponent to top 500 yards against Colorado, which has lost its league games by an average score of 50-17.

"It's execution," said CU safety Jared Bell, who had his third interception. "We have talent. We have everything you need. We just need to make plays. The coaches put us in the right position so it's on us."

For a while in the first half Saturday, it all looked so promising. The Buffaloes were reasonably containing Carey and Liufau looked more like a fifth-year senior than a first-year freshman.

Besides Liufau nickel-and-diming Arizona for 147 passing yards in the first half, he threw a gorgeous 75-yard scoring bomb to Paul Richardson on the first play of their second drive for a 7-7 tie.

It was on Liufau's shoulders. The Wildcats' improved defense — remember, this defense was worse than Colorado's a year ago — held the Buffs to only 42 rushing yards in the first half.

Becoming one dimensional, three Colorado drives ended in field-goal attempts. Will Oliver connected from a career-record 53 yards and 48 for a 13-10 lead with 5:12 left in the second quarter.

Suddenly, an upset brewed in Boulder. November looked meaningful; a bowl game seemed reasonable.

However, Denker showed Arizona isn't a one-man team. His beautiful 22-yard pass down the left sideline to tight end Terrence Miller at the 7 set up Carey's 7-yard touchdown run to regain the lead at 17-13.

In the third quarter, Denker ripped off runs of 54, 18 and 46 yards.

"They had to pick their poison," Carey said, "and they picked the wrong one."

Denker's arm, however, provided the play of the game. Faced with fourth-and-2 at the Buffs' 44 and leading 27-20, he beat a blitz by hitting Miller on a quick out and he ran 43 yards to the 1. Carey bulled over for a 34-20 lead.

Colorado had a chance to stay close but blew both chances. Liufau threw an incomplection with no one open on fourth-and-goal from the 4 and Darragh O'Neill's fake punt attempt from the Buffs' 16 netted 1 yard. That set up Carey's 6-yard touchdown and a safe 41-20 lead.

Asked about the fake punt, MacIntyre said: "If you saw us play defense, we couldn't stop them. I thought it was a good place to do it."

Now life gets worse. Colorado goes on the road to UCLA and Washington with Richardson, fourth nationally in average receiving yards per game, day to day with a sprained ankle suffered in the fourth quarter. This team is running out of teams to beat.

John Henderson: jhenderson@denverpost.com or twitter.com/johnhendersondp

Key stat

192 yards rushing for Arizona quarterback B.J. Denker. On 15 carries, he averaged 12.8 yards per rush.

Key play

On fourth-and-2 from the Colorado 44 and ahead only 27-20 in the third quarter, Denker hit tight end Terrence Miller in the flat and he raced 43 yards to the 1. Ka'Deem Carey then scored for a safe 34-20 lead.

John Henderson, The Denver Post

Frei: Mike MacIntyre resists fall from grace

By Terry Frei The Denver Post The Denver Post

Posted:

DenverPost.com

BOULDER — Mike MacIntyre entered the interview room after Colorado's 44-20 loss to Arizona and brusquely announced: "Three questions and I'm out of here." The Colorado coach answered the first two in rapid-fire snippets that seemed to indicate his determination to stick to his plan, and then the third question was why he was in such a hurry. "'Cuz I'm ready to get out of here," he said. "We played our hearts out. We have to play better."

Within a few seconds, though, it seemed to hit MacIntyre that his bewildering attitude could be counterproductive. The one thing he has been consistently granted in his first season with the Buffaloes is the understanding that he inherited a mess, and that he generally has handled it all with grace.

In fact, most arguments advanced in making the case that the Buffs have made progress under MacIntyre have come off as either backhanded compliments or condescension — or both. For example, the Buffaloes look as if they know what they're doing, as opposed to the frequent chaos under Jon Embree's ill-constructed coaching staff in 2011 and '12. And they don't quit. Unable to mitigate the talent gap in their third season in the Pac-12, the Buffs get worn down — and, ultimately, beaten down.

Unlike in 2012, they've at least been capable enough to beat FCS opponents.

Freshman quarterback Sefo Liufau shows promise. The decision to remove his redshirt five games into the season seems sensible, both as a sign of not surrendering in 2013 and getting him experience while looking ahead to 2014.

The CU fan base generally seems to get it. There has been grouching, but not the depressing onslaught of the acid-laced bitterness so often prevalent around the college game, especially in this era of so many outlets for expression ... including in Boulder a year ago.

The 56-17 loss to Oregon on Oct. 5 wasn't disquieting. The Buffs hung in that night, even in ways not reflected on the scoreboard. But that was Oregon.

This was Arizona, a middle-of-the-road Pac-12 team playing on the road. As the game went on, Arizona looked more like Oregon every minute ... and not only because Wildcats coach Rich Rodriguez also is a champion of the spread offense. Ultimately, MacIntyre seemed to get to a point that helped explain his terseness. He said this one hurt more than others "because we can beat that team."

Or maybe he just realized the truth: The Buffs still are in over their heads against a decent Pac-12 team. "It hurts because this is a team we definitely thought we'd be able to beat," said senior defensive end Chidera Uzo-Diribe.

Previously, MacIntyre has done a terrific job of not belittling his holdovers and getting the most out of them. That's pragmatic for a coach, of course. But one way to buy time in this era of absurd

salaries and correspondingly shorter fuses is to at least subtly trash everyone who was with the program before his hiring. And you can do it without coming out and saying it.

In that sense, he and another current Coach Mac — Colorado State's Jim McElwain — have taken similar high-road approaches. They also both face the sort of economic pressures more common to the college game every year. CSU needs to generate enthusiasm and the necessary seed money for the proposed on-campus stadium by late 2014. CU's struggle to upgrade facilities has been only highlighted by the move to the Pac-12, where garish excess is the standard.

Terry Frei: tfrei@denverpost.com