



By: Joel Broida

CU coach Mike MacIntyre says too much time per possession might be bad for Oregon.

Brooks: Ducks Make Most Of Meager Possession Time

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By: B.G. Brooks, Contributing Editor

BOULDER – For those who need proof that the most overworked, underwhelming statistic in college football might be time of possession, we present the 2013 Oregon Ducks.

Actually, we'll let Colorado coach Mike MacIntyre present No. 2 Oregon as well as his argument – a pretty sound one at that – as to why the Ducks having the ball for lengthy possessions might contribute to their downfall. (Hey, something has to, right?)

Sound convoluted? It's not – at least not on paper or a laptop screen.

Two statistical categories might be the most telling about the Ducks, their up-tempo offense, their blurring speed and their big-play capabilities:

(1) Oregon is averaging 59.8 points a game – second in the FBS behind Baylor at 69.7. The Ducks already have set a school record for the highest scoring average through their first four games, which pretty much have been yawners by halftime (38-3, 28-10, 38-7, 41-3; a tip of the facemask to Virginia for being down only 18);

(2) But Oregon is next-to-last in the FBS – No. 122 – in time of possession. Although their four wins have been by an average of 40 points, the Ducks have been on offense for 23:43 per game. Only San Jose State – MacIntyre's former team – has a lower time of possession (23:31) but the post-Mac Spartans are struggling (1-3).

The upshot here is that Oregon, which visits Folsom Field on Saturday (4 p.m., Pac-12 Network), doesn't need a lot of time to punch up a lot of points. So against the Ducks, MacIntyre theorizes that time of possession is quackery.

"I don't think that makes a difference," he said at his weekly media luncheon Tuesday. "You better score and you better stop them. You might be better off if they have the ball a long time. If it's longer drives, there's more chances for turnovers, there's more possibilities of making them have to do more third downs. So if you come out of it and they got it 30 minutes you might have played better.

"I'm being serious because then they'd have to put drives together and there'd more times they might turn the ball over. They'll have more third downs. That's more long-down situations where you can kind of go after them. A lot of times they slow down on third down and longs so they can see what they want to do (rather) than just keep moving. So if they get first down, second down, first down, second down they just got you in such a rhythm that it's tough."

In their two meetings with Oregon since becoming members of the Pac-12 Conference three seasons

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ago, the Buffs have gained firsthand knowledge about how quickly the Ducks can score. The last time Oregon visited Folsom Field (2011), the Ducks had first-quarter scoring drives of 80, 58, 87 and 80 yards. Time-wise, the longest required 2 minutes, 11 seconds; the shortest took only 50 seconds. Oregon won 45-2.

MacIntyre says the Ducks play at “hyperspeed” and that redshirt sophomore quarterback Marcus Mariota reminds him of San Francisco’s Colin Kaepernick when Kaepernick was at Nevada. Pretty good comparison, although Mariota has been every bit as effective but has better, faster players surrounding him.

In addition to ranking No. 2 in scoring offense, the Ducks are No. 1 in the FBS in rushing (332.5 yards a game), No. 3 in total offense (599.3), No. 4 in scoring defense (10.8 points a game) and No. 3 in punt returns (24.78 yard average).

If the Buffs concentrate too much on those numbers and those allowed (or not produced) in last weekend’s 44-17 loss at Oregon State, they’ll be overwhelmed by bad vibes. MacIntyre conceded he saw some “disheartening things” in Corvallis, but added there’s nothing uncorrectable for this week – specifically eliminating turnovers.

Plus, he said, “You watch the Oregon film and I think you focus more” – which undoubtedly helps the Buffs rid themselves of any hangover from losing their Pac-12 opener. Sunday’s and Tuesday’s practices, said MacIntyre, were crisp and energetic: “When we came out Sunday they weren’t dragging, no one showed up late and there were no mysterious injuries . . . I know our kids are excited (and) ready to move on.”

That requires learning from errors made in the Oregon State loss and dismissing the “here we go again” rumblings from outside the program based on the lopsided score.

“That’s what really upset me more than anything in the Oregon State game,” said senior linebacker and captain Derrick Webb. “You look at the score at the end of the game and it looks like, OK, these are the same Buffaloes as last year. I know that’s not the case.

“We’re not the same football team, we’re not the same defense as last year. You can pull up whatever stats, turnovers – we’re better there – we’re better on third down, we’re better stopping the run. After those three (games) we’re just a lot better on defense.

“We’re not the same team; we don’t give up . . . we play to the end (and) we play hard. We just had a couple of hiccups in that (OSU) game. It’s something to learn from; it’s a learning experience. You’ve got to make the plays that you have to make.”

“This is a new regime, a new program with new people,” added junior defensive end Juda Parker. “Last year’s in the past; we can’t think about that. We always have a goal in mind. You win some, you lose some. But you always have to stay focused. We’ll keep our heads up and press forward toward our goal.”

NOTABLE: MacIntyre’s critique of his O-line against OSU: The guys up front “weren’t as big a problem as maybe the wet ball.” He said for whatever reason – maybe it was the long layoff – “we weren’t on our game early as we should have been.” Right tackle Stephane Nembot, he added, continues to progress: “He’s getting better every game; one day they’re never going to get around him.” . . . Freshman Michael Adkins II ran for 98 yards in his college debut and will see Duck duty Saturday, with that role to be determined by Thursday. MacIntyre said Christian Powell, who has opened at running back in the first three games, likely will see playing time at fullback to get him and Adkins in the same backfield. Who gets the most tailback carries depends on who’s the most productive . . . MacIntyre worked under Bill Parcells in the NFL (Dallas) and picked up this from the coach formerly known as “The Big Tuna.” You can learn a lot about your quarterback after both bad and good games – specifically if he rebounds from bad ones and takes the good ones in stride. He added that CU starter Connor Wood won’t be facing a pedestrian ‘D’ on Saturday . . . CU has scheduled Charleston Southern University (another CSU) on Oct. 19 for its 12th game. MacIntyre said Athletic Director Rick George “exhausted himself” in the search for an opponent to replace Fresno State. As for MacIntyre’s part in the process, “I felt like a used car salesman; I never got so many ‘no’s in my life.” He called being able to schedule a 12th game at this point of the season “great for the community and the university . . . we’re excited about the opportunity to do it.” . . . Former CU coach Bill McCartney, who is to be inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in December, will be honored at Saturday’s game. “I’ve known about him since I was a player and I’ve gotten to know him here,” MacIntyre said. “I respect him as a person and a football coach . . . I know what he did for his young men as a coach; all that I’ve talked to respect him as a coach and a person.” MacIntyre’s roster features McCartney’s two grandsons – freshman defensive end Derek and offensive graduate assistant T.C. Bill McCartney will be honored at a Thursday banquet on campus.

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Colorado Buffaloes Football

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Coach Mike MacIntyre says Buffs can't allow Ducks to start fast

By Kyle Ringo Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

There is a noticeable difference in the Colorado football team this week after its first blowout loss of the season compared to how it responded a year ago in similar situations.

These Buffs don't appear downtrodden or resigned to their fate even though the No. 2 ranked Oregon Ducks are coming to town on Saturday and have laid waste to every opponent they have faced so far this season.

Perhaps it will change as the season wears on, but for now, the dread that was so apparent in the past seems to be gone.

"Coming in this morning and Sunday, everybody was just real focused," freshman linebacker Addison Gillam said. "People were taking more notes than I've ever seen anybody take and watching film and asking a lot more questions. I think people realize that losing is not fun and that they don't want to do it again."

Coach Mike MacIntyre met with the media at his weekly press luncheon Tuesday and said he has been pleased with the way his team has responded to its first setback under his watch. The Buffs lost 44-17 at Oregon State last week and enter Saturday's game 2-1 overall and 0-1 in Pac-12 Conference play.

"When they came out to practice Sunday, they were after it," MacIntyre said. "They were energetic. They weren't dragging. You didn't have people showing up late or trying to get out of practice for different mysterious injuries."

The Buffs have lost nine consecutive Pac-12 games with their last victory coming on the road more than a year ago on Sept. 22, 2012 at Washington State.

Oregon, which is now coached by former CU offensive coordinator Mark Helfrich, is the second highest scoring team in the nation and has scored more than 50 points in four consecutive games, a school record.

The Ducks have outscored the Buffs by 99 points in the last two years combined (115-16). Last season in Eugene, they accumulated 617 yards of total offense and 425 rushing yards and played backups and even scout team members for much of the second half.

Yet, the Buffs don't appear to be a defeated team ahead of time this year as they so often have been in the past when facing similar lopsided set ups.

"I know nobody believes in us, but it starts with us," said cornerback Greg Henderson, who has come up with a turnover in each of the Buffs' first three games. "If we believe that we can win, then I feel like we can beat this team."

"...I try not to worry about the underdogs and the point spread. We just got to go out there and play hard because it's college football. Anything can happen on any day of the week."

MacIntyre said the teams that have had success against Oregon in recent years have played tremendous defense and have not allowed the Ducks to establish big leads early. MacIntyre said the Oregon defense can play extremely aggressively in most games because it generally has a large lead and getting burned isn't a huge worry as it is in closer games. So the Ducks are able to take risks they might not ordinarily take.

CU fell behind 29-0 in the first quarter against Oregon in 2011 and 28-0 in the first quarter last season.

MacIntyre described the Ducks as a "hyperspeed" team, which speaks both to athleticism and the pace of play Oregon uses.

MacIntyre likes to play up-tempo offense. No one is better at that style of play than the Ducks who are proficient at snapping the ball within 11-12 seconds of the previous play ending. MacIntyre said the Buffs won't get away from that approach in an effort to keep the ball away from the Ducks as much as possible.

"I think you just got to do whatever you do best," MacIntyre said. "If you try to change what you're going to try to do in a game ... then you got to do what you do best and hope for the best."

MacIntyre said the key to slowing Oregon down is players recognizing formations despite the limited time they have to do so, getting the defense aligned properly and then filling the gaps they are supposed to fill and tackling well in open space. He said a goal should be to make the Ducks possess the ball longer and not give up big plays.

"You might be better off if they have the ball a long time," MacIntyre said. "It's longer drives, they got more chances for turnovers, there is more possibilities for making them have to do more third downs."

"So if you come out and they got it 30 minutes, you might have played better. I'm being serious because then they would have to put drives together."

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Howell: Oregon Ducks never miss a beat

By Brian Howell Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

Does anything really faze the Oregon football team?

On Saturday, the Ducks played against California in a driving rain.

It was weather hardly suited for football, as Oregon coach Mark Helfrich said the only way his team could have prepared for it was to practice "in a washing machine or a dishwasher."

Nevertheless, the Ducks rolled to a 55-16 victory. It was 55-3 by early in the third quarter.

Very little has gotten in Oregon's way in recent years, and that just might be the most impressive part about its program.

The Ducks (4-0) will visit Boulder on Saturday to face Colorado (2-1) at Folsom Field. Despite a second coaching change in the past five years, Oregon might be the most well-oiled machine in college football.

Known for its high-tempo offense and plethora of uniform and helmet combinations, the secret to Oregon's success has been its remarkable focus on one thing: Oregon.

"That's just kind of our way," Ducks head coach Mark Helfrich said Tuesday on his weekly Pac-12 coaches teleconference.

Helfrich went on to say that of course the Ducks will prepare for certain opponents and study their strengths and weaknesses, but then they "just worry about our deal -- our preparation and our enthusiasm and our effort that goes into that. That's all you can do."

Oregon has been doing that for a while now.

In 1994, Rich Brooks, in his 18th year with the Ducks, led them to a 9-4 record and a trip to the Rose Bowl. Brooks left for the NFL after that season and handed the program to Mike Bellotti.

Bellotti coached the Ducks from 1995-2008, going 116-55 with four 10-win seasons.

Then came Chip Kelly, and the Ducks not only didn't miss a beat, they got better. Kelly went 46-7 from 2009-12.

It was under Kelly that Oregon really took the next step. The Ducks played in BCS bowl games all four years with Kelly, and their dominance hit a new level.

Since the start of 2009, the Ducks have lost to just one unranked team, a 51-42 defeat at Stanford in 2009. Stanford moved into the rankings the next day.

Oregon is 40-4 since the start of 2010, including 29-0 against unranked teams. All four losses came against Top 20 teams, with three of them coming by just three points. Of the 29 wins against unranked teams, 28 have come by at least 11 points.

Oregon is that rare team that never seems to play down to its competition. The Ducks play with the same intensity against Nicholls State as they do against Stanford.

That was true under Kelly, and it's true with Helfrich, who is in his first season as the head coach. The former CU offensive coordinator took over when Kelly left for the NFL's Philadelphia Eagles.

For anyone who thought Oregon would slip up a bit without Kelly, Saturday's win against Cal was the closest game the Ducks have had to this point.

The high-tempo offense, which has set the bar for speed in college football, is running at supersonic speed right now. The Ducks rank 122nd out of 123 schools in time of possession (23 minutes per game), yet rank second in scoring, with a stunning 59.8 points per game.

The train keeps rolling.

"If you take a deep breath and a sigh and a relaxing breath because you're playing a supposed team you're going to beat and then you have to ramp it up for a team that's supposedly better than you, you're not going to maximize your opportunities for success by doing that," said Helfrich, who was Kelly's offensive coordinator from 2009-2012. "That's just something we believe in."

No, the Ducks don't seem to be deterred by anything.

Road games don't bother them. Monsoons don't bother them. So, surely Helfrich isn't going to be fazed on Saturday when he walks back into Folsom Field, where he coached from 2006-08.

"It's always just a little awkward coming out of the visiting locker room at a place you worked," Helfrich said. "But, more or less, we just try to approach it like any other team."

That's how Oregon rolls, and that's why very few programs in the country can match their success.

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Colorado football: Buffs will go with hot hand at running back

By Brian Howell Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

Through the first two games of the season, Michael Adkins II was just another freshman headed toward a redshirt season.

Now, he's the running back du jour at Colorado.

The true freshman from San Diego rushed for 98 yards on 14 carries in Saturday's 44-17 loss at Oregon State. Head coach Mike MacIntyre said, "You'll definitely see Michael Adkins (this Saturday against Oregon) as much as you saw his last week, unless something happens."

Ever since Rodney Stewart graduated after the 2011 season, running back has been a fluid position at CU. Stewart led the Buffs in rushing four years in a row from 2008-11.

A year ago, Tony Jones went into the season as the starter, but was quickly passed up by Christian Powell. Now a sophomore, Powell, has been the starter, but he's now third on the team in rushing -- behind Jones (the junior has a team-high 107 yards on 29 attempts) and Adkins. Powell has 85 yards on 31 carries this season.

CU running backs coach Klayton Adams said it really doesn't matter who starts. In fact, he's happy to have all three backs -- plus sophomore Donta Abron -- in the mix.

"I still think we've got a lot of good guys and we've got to keep putting them in situations to be successful and keep giving those guys opportunities to show what they can do because I believe in all of them," Adams said.

After his sparkling debut on Saturday, Adkins looks like the best of the bunch right now. But Adams said any one of his backs could have a big day.

"I think you've got to find the right combination of things and sometimes you're facing a certain opponent where one guy has some attributes that are really going to let him be successful," Adams said. "We have to put those guys into situations where what they do and what they're good at is being highlighted on the field, so we're continuing to work on that. Hopefully the outcome continues to get better and better as we improve."

The Buffs ran for a season-high 154 yards as a team on Saturday.

Adams said that throughout his coaching career, he's never had a running back that carried the load alone, so CU fans can expect to see multiple backs being used as the Buffs move forward.

"Sometimes when a guy has a hot hand, you're going to let him ride it a little bit," Adams said. "Sometimes you get into a situation where a guy is hot for five or six or 10 weeks in a row, and that's always a good situation to have, too."

MacIntyre said Tuesday that Powell will be used at both tailback and fullback. The 6-foot, 235-pounder was a fullback in high school and has been used at that position briefly this season.

Colorado football: Buffs' Mike MacIntyre thrilled to have schedule figured out

By Brian Howell Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

Mike MacIntyre was relieved when CU announced on Monday that Charleston Southern has agreed to visit the Buffs on Oct. 19, eliminating the hole in CU's schedule left by the cancellation of the Fresno State game after record flooding in Boulder last month.

"I am excited that we have another game," MacIntyre said. "I'll tell you, (athletic director Rick George) exhausted himself after the Fresno game (was cancelled on Sept. 13). Me and him spent a lot of Saturday (Sept. 14) and then all day Sunday (Sept. 15) calling people right and left and working every scenario.

"I felt like a used-car salesman. I never heard so many 'no's' in my entire life and I know Rick felt the same way."

MacIntyre said the Buffs had a couple of deals nearly done before the other school would change its mind and back out. He said Charleston Southern was "the only team left standing that was wanting to play us.

"Thank goodness they did and it's going to be great for the community, great for the university, and it's a way we can give back to the community through the whole thing. It's also our guys getting another game and the university getting another game and so I am excited about the opportunity to do it."

Notable

As a team, CU has rushed for 337 yards this season, an average of 112.3 yards per game. Oregon averages 332.5 rushing yards per game. ... Oregon running back De'Anthony Thomas injured his ankle Saturday against California and may not play against the Buffs. Two years ago, the Ducks came to Boulder without starting tailback LaMichael James, but rushed for 371 yards, led by backups Kenjon Barner (115 yards) and Tra Carson (80).

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CU Buffs' task against No. 2-ranked Oregon: Slow down Ducks

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

Posted:

DenverPost.com

BOULDER — The way coach Mike MacIntyre sees it, the best chance his Colorado Buffaloes have Saturday against No. 2 Oregon is if the Ducks have the ball more.

Make sense? If does if you've seen Oregon's offense.

After scraping themselves off the turf and checking for burn marks, many steamrolled opponents think when the Ducks have the ball, at least they're not kicking off after another score. They're not celebrating in an end zone. They're not making the "3" and "4" on the down marker useless pieces of equipment.

"It's longer drives," MacIntyre said Tuesday. "There's more chance for turnovers. There's more possibilities of making them do more third downs. So if you've come out of it and they've played 30 minutes, you might've played better.

"I'm being serious."

Oregon's spread offense has made the time-of-possession stat as meaningless as the time-of-tailgate parties. Out of 123 Division I teams, Oregon's time of possession (23:43) is 122nd.

Yet the Ducks are second in scoring at 59.8 points per game. Of their 31 offensive touchdowns, 26 of the "drives" have been shorter than two minutes. Boiling water takes longer than an Oregon touchdown drive.

Colorado, which has lost to Oregon the past two years by scores of 70-14 and 45-2, has simple goals. One, get the Ducks to face a third down as much as possible. That won't be easy. Oregon has twice as many offensive touchdowns as punts (13).

"Sometimes they slow down on third-and-longs so they can see what they want to do and they don't just keep moving," MacIntyre said. "But they get first down, second down, first down, second down. They get in such a rhythm, it's tough."

Two, make it a game into the third quarter. A year ago, the Ducks led CU 56-0 at the half. Maybe the Ducks will spend much of the first half yawning.

Don't count on it. Oregon (4-0, 1-0 Pac-12) has outscored its opponents in the first half 145-23. In the second halves, Oregon's improved defense can take chances. Only emptying the Ducks' bench saves their foes from more record-setting humiliation.

"We need to keep them at bay and not let them suffocate us too early, and all of a sudden we'll have more options on offense," MacIntyre said. "We'll move the ball better than people

have moved on them if we can not let them get up 28 points, bang, bang, bang. That's a big 'if.' Nobody's done it.

"That's our goal, to be able to do that."

It will help Colorado (2-1, 0-1) keep the ball if it can sort out its shaky rushing attack. The Buffaloes are 103rd nationally at 115.7 yards per game. Starter Christian Powell has gained only 85 yards on a 2.7-yard average. He is splitting reps with true freshman Michael Adkins II, who debuted Saturday with 98 yards at Oregon State.

"Right now you'll see Michael Adkins as much as you saw him last week, unless something happens," MacIntyre said. "Christian Powell, you'll see him at tailback and you might see him at fullback, too, being able to have both of them in the backfield."

Footnote. CU's game Oct. 12 at Arizona State in Tempe will start at 8 p.m. MDT and will be televised on the Pac-12 Network.

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Oregon RB De'Anthony Thomas not playing against Colorado

By John Henderson The Denver Post The Denver Post

Posted:

DenverPost.com

Oregon's De'Anthony Thomas, arguably the fastest player in the country, will not play Saturday at Colorado, running backs coach Gary Campbell said Tuesday.

The Heisman Trophy candidate sprained his ankle on the opening kickoff Saturday night against California and was on crutches at halftime.

Campbell told The Oregonian newspaper that Thomas' goal was "to be ready this week but obviously that's not going to happen."

Thomas has rushed for 338 yards in three games, averaging 8.0 yards a carry to go with six touchdowns. He had a boot on his right foot this week and has been running on an underwater treadmill.

"Those things are always day to day," Campbell said. "He's walking around on it a little bit and we're just hoping every day it gets a little bit better."

The second-ranked Ducks (4-0, 1-0 Pac-12) play the Buffaloes (2-1, 0-1) at 4 p.m. at Folsom Field.

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Mike MacIntyre hoping CU Buffs keep 2nd-ranked Oregon from fast start

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

DenverPost.com

BOULDER — Colorado coach Mike MacIntyre thinks if his Buffaloes can stay close in the second half against second-ranked Oregon on Saturday, they have a chance.

This IF has a capital "I" and "F."

"That's a big 'if.' Nobody's done it. That's our goal, to be able to do that. And win the game is our main goal."

MacIntyre called the 4-0 (1-0 Pac-12) Ducks "the best team in the country" before backing off and saying they're one of the top two or three. But it's clear deep down he sees them as No. 1.

"I'd say right now the way they're clicking off and beating everybody, it's not even close," he said. "At halftime it's over. Every game. It's over. Hopefully, this one won't be over and we'll be right in it. That's what we plan on doing."

It will help if Colorado pumps up its rushing attack and keeps Oregon's offense off the field. The Buffaloes (2-1, 0-1) are 103rd nationally in rushing at 115.7 yards per game.

Starter Christian Powell is sharing reps with Michael Adkins II, the true freshman who debuted Saturday with 98 yards at Oregon State.

"Today we rotated them in and out," MacIntyre said. "We'll discuss it more Thursday. We play them continuously during the week. They rotate and get all the plays. We practice so hard we can't run them all the time. Just one guy, you'll wear them out for Saturday."

"Right now you'll see Michael Adkins as much as you saw him last week unless something happens. Christian Powell you'll see him at tailback and you might see him at fullback, too."

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Ducks familiar with road success

Written by Gary Horowitz Statesman Journal

Oct. 01

statesmanjournal.com



Taylor Hart hits the quarterback as he throws the ball as the Oregon Ducks host Tennessee in a college football game at Autzen Stadium in Eugene. / Thomas Patterson / Statesman Journal

NO. 2 OREGON AT COLORADO

When: 3 p.m., Folsom Field, Boulder, Colo. **Records:** Oregon (4-0, 1-0 Pac-12 North), Colorado (2-1, 0-1 Pac-12 South). **TV:** Pac-12 network.

INSIDE LOOK AT COLORADO

Record: 2-1 (0-1 Pac-12 South), lost 44-17 at Oregon State last Saturday. **Coach:** Mike MacIntyre, first season. **Key offensive player:** Junior wide receiver Paul Richardson (6-1, 170) leads the nation with an average of 162.3 yards receiving per game. He has 26 catches for 487 yards and five touchdowns. Richards opened the season with back-

to-back 200-yard receiving games. He has made a strong return after missing the 2012 campaign with a knee injury. **Key defensive player:** Senior linebacker Derrick Webb (6-0, 225) led the Buffaloes in tackles last season with 81. He's second thus far with 24 stops, and was on the preseason watch list for the Butkus Award, which is presented to the nation's premier linebacker. **Outlook:** The Buffaloes have already doubled their win total from last season's 1-11 disaster with victories in the first two games, but they were outplayed last weekend in a 44-17 loss to Oregon State. It was Colorado's first game in three weeks and rust may have been a factor. Colorado is averaging 411.3 ypg game and 32 points, both dramatic improvements from last season. Quarterback Connor Wood is 13th in the nation in passing (295.7 ypg). The Buffaloes were 1-8 in the Pac-12 last season and their 2013 campaign will be measured on whether they can improve on that win total. Being competitive would be a step in the right direction.

EUGENE — There are some college football teams that struggle when they leave the familiar confines of home.

No. 2 Oregon isn't one of those programs.

The Ducks' 16-game winning streak in non-neutral site away games is the longest in the nation, followed by Northern Illinois (11) and No. 1 Alabama (10). Oregon is a 39-point favorite to extend that streak Saturday at Colorado.

Oregon's last road defeat — a loss to LSU in the 2011 season-opener was a neutral-site game played in Arlington, Texas, — came on Nov. 7, 2009 at Stanford during Chip Kelly's first season as head coach.

According to defensive end Taylor Hart, routine is one of the key ingredients in Oregon's road warrior persona.

"I think it comes down to the coaches," Hart said. "We stay (in Eugene), we practice here, and then we fly and we go to the hotel and have meetings. It's pretty much the same deal for us."

The Ducks are 1-0 in road games under first-year coach Mark Helfrich, with a 59-10 rout at Virginia on Sept. 7.

Surprisingly, Oregon's last two regular season Pac-12 losses came at Autzen Stadium – to Stanford last season and USC in 2011.

In the Ducks most recent trip to Boulder in 2011, the Ducks rolled to a 45-2 win. Colorado, which has already doubled its win total from last season's 1-11 mark, is coming off a 44-17 loss at Oregon State.

"I just love the atmosphere when we're away," center Hroniss Grasu said. "In away games when you've got the fans yelling at you and all that stuff, you try to take it out of your mind. But it's all fun."

Thomas update: Running back De'Anthony Thomas, who suffered an ankle injury on the opening kickoff of last Saturday's 55-16 victory over California, met with the media after Tuesday's practice wearing pads, and with a boot on his right lower leg.

He is questionable for the Colorado game.

Malone making plays: In his first season as a full-time starter, junior weak-side linebacker Derrick Malone leads the Ducks with 35 tackles. That's 14 more than Oregon's second-leading tackler, cornerback Ifo Ekpre-Olomu.