



By: Joel Broida

The Buffaloes defense needs to be on the same page in facing the high-powered Oregon Ducks' offense Saturday.



Brooks: Buffs 'D' Must Talk Often, Think Fast vs. Ducks

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By: B.G. Brooks, Contributing Editor

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BOULDER – The last thing Colorado defensive coordinator Kent Baer needs from his players on Saturday is a failure to communicate. Not getting lined up correctly and quickly is not far behind.

When facing Oregon and its dizzying offense, knowing what to do and doing it swiftly is critical for a defense. The Ducks' spread-it-out, speed-it-up philosophy leaves no time for indecision, which Baer and his coaches are stressing to the Buffs prior to Saturday's matchup at Folsom Field (4 p.m., Pac-12 Network).

Counting CU, Baer has been a defensive coordinator at nine FBS schools, so preparing for warp-speed offenses isn't new for him. But this one is different. Oh, yes.

"I've been around a long time; I've seen some SC teams over the years that were fast," Baer said. "But the game has changed. The difference with these guys is that they spread you out so much and are so fast."

Oregon has changed head coaches, but not its tempo. Mark Helfrich, the former CU offensive coordinator/quarterbacks coach (2006-2008), was named as Chip Kelly's replacement in January when Kelly took his fast-paced style to the NFL (Philadelphia).

But little has changed under the affable Helfrich, the first Oregon native to head the school's football program in 71 years. The No. 2-ranked Ducks are college football's top rushing team (332.5 yards a game), are No. 3 in total offense (599.3) and No. 2 in scoring (59.8 points a game).

Slowing the Ducks is close to impossible, so this week finds Baer and his staff trying to put the Buffs in position to "play fastball with them," he said. "You've got to communicate and get aligned. You've got to understand what they like to do out of certain backfield sets and formations, then communicate and get aligned in a hurry.

"You make a play on the ball, then you get ready and do it again. They'll run the same play out of the same set two or three times. You've got to get aligned and communicate. You get aligned and you've got a chance to get yourself in the right spot."

That thought is being stressed and re-stressed this week, said junior defensive end Juda Parker: "We were looking back at the games that Oregon has played this year and our coaches have been telling us if you're not in the right spot they'll gash you and it'll probably be six points. We're really focusing on being in the right gaps, staying in the right gaps and attaining leverage so we can make plays."

But this might surprise some: While they are college football's highest-ranked team playing "fastball," the

Ducks aren't even atop the Pac-12 Conference in averaging the most plays per game. In fact, there are seven Pac-12 teams – including CU – that average more plays per game.

California is No. 1 nationally, averaging 98 plays per game, with UCLA and Washington at 86.3, Arizona at 83, Arizona State at 82.3, Oregon State at 81.2, CU at 77 and Oregon at 74 – or No. 60 on the overall list. Hoping to get his players accustomed to lining up fast and in the right places, Baer's plan by the end of the week was to have his defense see 120-130 plays per practice.

But what puts the Ducks offense a cut above most of the other hurry-up outfits is superior personnel, starting with quarterback Marcus Mariota. He averages 324.5 yards a game in total offense and operates the spread offense as efficiently as any QB in the country. In four lopsided wins, Mariota has run for just under 300 yards (295) and passed for just over 1,000 (1,003). He's thrown for nine touchdowns (no interceptions) and run for five more.

"You're not a very good spread team if that guy can't run," Baer said. "It's all part of it . . . Mariota creates another dimension to worry about. That's why they're a good spread team. That guy can run and he does a good job of throwing the ball."

Oregon's 332.5 ground yards a game have been compiled without a 100-yard per game rusher. But three players are averaging 73 or more ground yards a game: De'Anthony Thomas (84.5), Byron Marshall (81.5) and Mariota (73.8). However, an ankle injury suffered on last weekend's opening kickoff against Cal is expected to sideline Thomas this Saturday.

Given the Ducks' overall speed, the Buffs also are stressing sure tackling "in space," which Baer's players know is critical. Oregon's speed, said senior inside linebacker Derrick Webb, "only puts pressure on the defense if you give them a lot of one-on-one situations. When they get us in space we've got to rally to the football. When you get speed like that in the open field it's going to be tough for any defender . . .

"If you make the tackle in open field it's a great tackle, but if you miss then there's a lot of space to be made up. We've got to get more than one guy on each player when they get in space. They've got a lot of speed on the outside; they'll try to get the ball in their playmakers' hands . . . we've got to run to the football, swarm to the football."

The Buffs are 0-1 in the Pac-12, coming off a 44-17 loss at Oregon State they believe is not representative of the defensive progress they claim to have made. Baer was emphatic about what needs to be done differently this week: "Make the plays – just make the plays. You watch that (Oregon State) tape, it's 10-3 with two minutes to go in the first half. We dropped four interceptions, outright dropped four interceptions. You've got to make those plays. Good teams do. If you make plays it's a whole different game. We had them (players) in the right spots, but you've got to make plays. That's the bottom line."

Parker echoed that: "That game was (decided) by three or four plays. We didn't execute on some, they did. It came down to executing when you have that opportunity. That's what we're focusing on this week. When a team is fast and quick, it's our coaches' job to put us in the right spot. Then the players' job is to make the plays. Even though they're fast, we have to utilize our speed as well. We have to be in the right spot to make the plays when the plays come to us."

As fast as the Ducks play, the Buffs know their first chance at making a play likely will be their only chance. To borrow a basketball term, if you're inefficient it's one and done.

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Colorado Buffaloes Football

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Colorado football: Buffs' Michael Adkins making case for more carries

By Kyle Ringo Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

Defensive coordinator Kent Baer is normally charged with slowing down offenses, but he deserves credit for adding some badly needed speed to the Colorado attack.

Baer is the CU coach responsible for spotting running back Michael Adkins II in the recruiting process and helping land a commitment from a player other programs apparently overlooked.

Adkins made his debut for the Buffs last week in a losing effort at Oregon State. The true freshman from the San Diego area was a bright spot for the Buffs in the lopsided loss nearly rushing for 100 yards in his first college game and showing a burst not seen from other CU running backs so far this season.

"It's great that I got the yards that I got, but the ultimate goal is to win the game," Adkins said Thursday as the Buffs prepare to host No. 2 Oregon on Saturday at Folsom Field (4:07 p.m., Pac-12 Network).

Adkins was recognized more for his academic prowess in high school as a 4.0 student than he was for what he did on the field -- and what he did on the football field was impressive. Adkins was the San Diego Union Tribune's All-Academic team captain for football as a senior and a National Football Foundation scholar athlete.

"He fits in well with the group of humble, low-ego, hard-working guys that want the team to win and they want to help the team win," CU running backs coach Klayton Adams said of Adkins and the rest of the group of backs he coaches.

Adams is just 5-foot-10 but is a long-strider as a running back with deceptive speed. His father ran track in college at UNLV and San Diego State and Adkins ran track in high school, once logging a 10.8-second 100 meters and a 22.2 in the 200 (both hand timed)

He might remind some CU fans of Lamont Warren, who starred for the Buffs in the early 1990s, purely from a style standpoint. It remains to be seen if he can draw those types of comparisons as he continues to earn playing time and grow into his new role as a regular contributor for the CU offense.

None of CU's running backs have distinguished themselves so far this season but Adkins has come closest in his only game. Adams and coach Mike MacIntyre said this week that other backs will continue to get opportunities along with Adkins and often times they will go with the hot hand.

That means fans can still expect to see Tony Jones, Christian Powell and Donta Abron on the field this week, unless Adkins outplays them once again.

"Production speaks for itself," Adams said. "If you're going in and you're making things happen and you're helping the offense sustain drives and you're helping the offense move the football, we're going to probably lean your direction. That probably is the story of what happened with Michael."

Adkins is quiet guy who is team oriented. He said his only concern is filling whatever role CU coaches put him in. He's not worried about carries or yardage totals and doesn't really have any personal goals along those lines for the rest of the season. But he is enjoying realizing a dream he has had since he was a young boy.

"It's definitely exciting," he said. "It's always been a dream of mine to play college football and I'm playing in the Pac-12, big time football. So I just go out and compete and play with the best."

Notable

Cornerback John Walker has switched jersey numbers from No. 26 to No. 5 for the rest of the season.

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

Colorado football: McCartney brothers eager to see grandfather honored

By Kyle Ringo Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

One player and one member of the coaching staff will remain on the field Saturday when the Colorado football team heads to the locker room at halftime of its game with No. 2 Oregon.

True freshman defensive lineman Derek McCartney and offensive graduate assistant T.C. McCartney will get to see their grandfather, Bill McCartney, honored during a halftime ceremony at Folsom Field.

Bill McCartney will be the first CU coach inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in December. He will join six former CU players in the hall and the school chose this weekend to honor his achievement.

A weekend of festivities actually kicked off Thursday afternoon with a luncheon on campus in McCartney's honor. Dozens of his former players are expected to return to town this weekend to see the coach who led the program to its only national championship in 1990 honored.

T.C. and Derek McCartney grew up in Boulder in a house next door to their grandfather. Both were fathered by former CU football players but didn't have their fathers in their lives growing up.

T.C.'s father, the late-Sal Aunese died from stomach cancer in 1989 and became the emotional centerpiece of the Buffs' run to the national title game in 1989 against Notre Dame. Derek's father, Shannon Clavelle, played for McCartney 1992-1994 but hasn't always been a part of Derek's life.

Both young men said their grandfather was a father figure, friend and mentor to them growing up and continues to fill those roles today.

"I grew up right around him next door or living with him my entire life so he had a huge influence on me, everything I did, every aspect of my life," T.C. McCartney said. "So I'm really proud that he got elected to the hall of fame and I can't wait until Saturday to see him get honored in front of everybody.

"I wouldn't miss it."

Derek McCartney said its obvious how much earning induction to the hall of fame has meant to his grandfather, who found out in early May when the National Football Foundation announce the 2013 class. Derek McCartney said he's looking forward to seeing that joy on his grandfather's face again Saturday.

"He means the world," Derek McCartney said. "I mean, just not having a dad around my whole life he's always been there for me. I've lived next door so he's always been kind of a father figure. It has been awesome."

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

CU-Oregon: Buffs have big to-do list to stop high-flying Ducks in Boulder

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

DenverPost.com

BOULDER — Only four teams have defeated Oregon in the past four seasons and the second-ranked Ducks (4-0, 1-0 Pac-12) appear better than ever heading into Saturday's game at CU. Oregon is beating teams by an average score of 51-5 — after three quarters.

Next up is Colorado (2-1, 0-1) which has merely lost to Oregon the last two years by scores of 70-14 and 45-2. New Colorado coach Mike MacIntyre must devise a new plan but in the meantime, he gave his young Buffaloes some advice.

"Enjoy the moment," he said. "You're getting to play against the best team in the country."

Yes, some would argue Oregon is better than No. 1 Alabama. How do you slow an offense that averages 59.8 points a game and 26 of its 31 offensive touchdowns have been scored in possessions lasting less than two minutes? Here are some tips:

1. Get lined up fast. It sounds simple but it isn't. The Ducks get off a play every 19.6 seconds.

"You watch the tape and they probably get at least two touchdowns a game because people aren't lined up," Colorado defensive coordinator Kent Baer said. "Maybe three."

Stanford beat Oregon last year, 17-14. A key for Stanford was a drill during which a scout team runs out to an offensive formation then sprints back to the sideline, replaced by another scout team sprinting to formation. They didn't even use a football.

2. Limit space. Tackling what MacIntyre calls Oregon's "hyper speed" in open space is crucial. One key is limiting that space. The cornerbacks must play tight man-to-man.

"If I'm playing man and playing off 3 yards as opposed to a zone where I'm 10 yards off, it reduces space considerably," said Gary Barnett, former Colorado coach and now an analyst for Sports USA Radio. "You're at risk for a big play, but you've got to pick your poison."

Stanford tackled extremely well in its victory a year ago. The Cardinal also has NFL-caliber linebackers who forced Oregon's speed inside.

"What contain does is the more defenders you have on the outside of an offensive player, then you're forcing them back to where everybody is pursuing from," said Joel Klatt, former Colorado quarterback and analyst for Fox Sports 1.

3. Be physical. Oregon has a finesse offense. That's no knock on the Ducks. Few teams can catch them. But Stanford outmuscled Oregon last year, and Auburn won the war of the trenches in the BCS Championship after the 2010 season.

"They're better at throwing the ball than they have been in the past," said Sonny Dykes, whose Cal Bears got steamrolled Saturday night, 55-16. "It starts up front. Your defensive line has to get off blocks and get penetration and contain the quarterback."

4. Create turnovers. Oregon's defense is one of its best ever. Opposing offenses must work from short fields. LSU beat Oregon in the 2011 season opener, 40-27, thanks to three fumble recoveries and an interception.

Good luck. In four games, Oregon has two turnovers.

5. Sustain drives. In USC's 38-35 win two years ago, the Trojans had 23 first downs and were 7-of-13 on third-down conversions.

"It's not a matter of slowing them down," said Virginia coach Mike London, whose team was pummeled, 59-10, by Oregon. "It's a matter of when you have the ball yourself, how are you going to control the clock?"

6. Get them nervous. In the past four seasons, only six teams have been within double digits of Oregon in the fourth quarter. Oregon lost four of them. And the Ducks still haven't settled on a placekicker.

Those are six tall tasks. Who is capable?

"Stanford is the only team in the country that can do that," Klatt said. "Maybe Georgia. Maybe Alabama."

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

Offensive juggernaut

A look at Oregon's key offensive statistics and its national ranking.

Category	No.	Rank
Rushing	332.5	1st
Scoring	59.8	2nd
Turnover margin	+2.3	2nd
Total offense	599.3	3rd
*punt returns	24.8	3rd
Scoring defense	10.8	4th
*-per return		

Source: ncaa

On TV

Oregon at Colorado, 4 p.m. Saturday, Pac-12 Network (Channel 430 on Comcast-Denver, 5453 on Dish; DirecTV does not carry the channel)



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The simple search for UO students.

GameDay: Paul Richardson becomes role model for injured players



Wide receiver Paul Richardson dodges CSU defender Aaron Davis. (James Bradbury/CU Independent)

Posted by [Hayden Kim](#) on Thursday, Oct. 3 at 2:24 pm.

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Everyone wanted Paul Richardson on their team. Excluding Stanford, the entire Pac-12 conference was after Richardson and it eventually came down to a game of timing. He

wanted to leave California and that very feeling would land him in Colorado in 2010. Richardson has since pursued the dream that his father, who played in the NFL, had birthed in him and is continuing to climb the ranks as a player.

“Following his footsteps was fun,” Richardson said. “It’s great doing some of the things he did and surpass him because that means more to him that he was able to see me do it.”

In the spring of his sophomore year, Richardson suffered a knee injury that would change the course of his college career. After leading his team for his first two seasons, Richardson learned to be patient in the recovery process while also maintaining his self confidence.

Now a redshirt junior, Richardson is the leading wide receiver for the Colorado Buffaloes and ranks ninth all-time on the touchdown reception list at his school. He is also one of the highest rated NFL draft prospects in his class.

What made Richardson the player he is today isn’t something that he accounted for when he entered college as Scout.com’s No. 22 receiver in the nation. After leading the Buffaloes in his first two seasons, Richardson suffered a torn ACL in the spring of his junior year. He returned to practice by the end of the season, but it was largely due to the support of his family, specifically his brother who would help him get out of bed everyday.

“I had to fly one of my brothers out here to help come take care of me because I couldn’t even lift my own leg,” Richardson said. “He had to lift my leg and pull me out of bed. [The family] stayed in prayer with me and made sure that I didn’t doubt myself so that my nine-to-12-month recovery didn’t turn into a year-in-a-half to two-year recovery.”

Following the injury, Richardson feels he has become a stronger player. In addition to receiving support from his family, Richardson gained inspiration from players like Adrian Peterson, who has become the role model for recovering from an ACL tear. Richardson overcame a potentially career-ending injury and has turned it into a positive.

“Watching Adrian Peterson was amazing,” Richardson said. “That gave me motivation as far as just knowing that ‘hey you’re going to be alright’ and ever since I touched the field I was never worried about my knee.”

Now recovered, Richardson is back to focusing on helping his team win games and surpassing his father as a player. Richardson has already racked up 487 receiving yards on 26 receptions, has pulled in five touchdowns and is back on pace to move up in the all-time receiving lists at Colorado. Considering he was sitting in his dorm room with a brace on his knee just a year ago, Richardson has become an inspiration himself for other college

players to remain confident in their game during a time of injury.

“It’s helped me because I’ve gotten stronger,” Richardson said. “I’ve gotten faster, I’ve gotten a little bigger and I’m able to recover better.”

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With a deep, talented attack that includes Marcus Mariota, Oregon might not have a problem continuing its historic offensive start without its star running back.

The second-ranked Ducks could be missing leading rusher De'Anthony Thomas as they look to extend a nation-best 16-game road winning streak Saturday at Colorado.

Thomas has played a key role in a prolific Oregon offense that has scored at least 50 points in four straight games for the first time in school history. He's paced the nation's top rushing attack (332.5 yards per game) with 338 yards and six touchdowns on 42 carries for the Ducks (4-0, 1-0 Pac-12).

The speedy junior, however, slipped and clutched his lower right leg during the opening kickoff in Saturday's 55-16 win over California in a rain-soaked Pac-12 opener. After the half, he appeared on the sidelines with crutches.

Now Thomas' status is uncertain heading into the Ducks' first conference road test against the Buffaloes (2-1, 0-1).

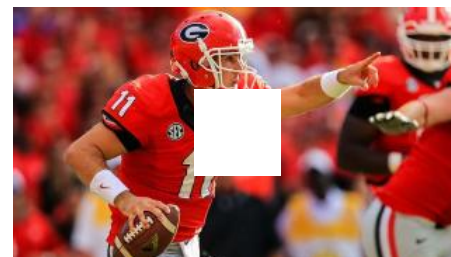
"The type of player he is, you're going to miss him no matter what, but guys really stepped up ??? Byron (Marshall) stepped up and Thomas (Tyner) stepped up," Mariota told Oregon's official website. "The motto around here is 'next man up.' Those guys played well, and obviously we're going to miss De'Anthony, but he's going to take care of it and it's his business."

Thomas rushed for 97 yards and a score on just five attempts to help the Ducks jump out to a 56-0 halftime lead en route to a 70-14 victory over visiting Colorado last October.

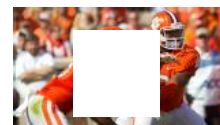
Even if Thomas is able to suit up in this meeting, Marshall and Tyner could receive a majority of the carries for the Ducks. Marshall filled in with a career-high 130 yards and two touchdowns against the Golden Bears, but will have to protect the ball better after fumbling

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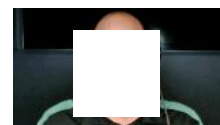
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three times in the wet conditions.

"We have a ton of confidence in Byron, he had an exceptional fall camp there and needs to keep developing," said Mark Helfrich, in his first season as head coach of an Oregon team that has averaged 46.3 points during its road win streak.

The Buffaloes are likely to have their hands full with Mariota, who has emerged as a Heisman Trophy candidate by throwing for 1,003 yards and nine touchdowns without an interception. He also tops the nation among all players with 14.0 yards per rushing attempt.

Mariota, who completed 10 of 14 passes for 136 yards and two scores in last year's rout, leads an Oregon team that ranks second in scoring at 59.8 points per game and third in total offense with 599.3 yards per game.

Colorado has given up the second-most points (31.7) among Pac-12 teams and allowed Oregon State's Sean Mannion to throw for 414 yards and a school-record six touchdowns in a 44-17 loss in its league opener last Saturday.

After completing 68.3 percent of his attempts for 741 yards in wins over Colorado State and Central Arkansas, Connor Wood connected on 14 of 34 passes for 146 yards with two touchdowns and two interceptions against the Beavers.

Paul Richardson was held to five catches for 70 yards and a score after totaling 417 yards and four touchdowns in his first two contests.

"They're definitely a lot better (than that performance)," said Helfrich, an offensive assistant at Colorado from 2006-08. "The first couple games were a lot different; they played really, really well."

Helfrich's squad may have to keep an eye on Michael Adkins II, who provided a spark with 98 yards on 14 carries Saturday in his season debut. The freshman running back displayed an impressive burst on runs of 19 and 33 yards.

"He's fast, he gets to sidelines, he runs hard," Colorado coach Mike MacIntyre told the school's official website. "I don't know if he's the starter but he's going to play."

The Buffaloes may have a difficult time getting back on track offensively against an Oregon team that ranks fourth in the nation in scoring defense at 10.8 points per game.

Colorado also will try to contain sophomore Bralon Addison, who ran back two punts for touchdowns Saturday and leads the country with 36.5 yards per return.

Oregon has a 9-8 lead in the all-time series after winning the past two meetings by a combined 115-16.

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