

Coach MacIntyre compares FCS Bears' offense to Oregon

By Brian Howell Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

Every year, teams from the Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) have a way of reminding the rest of the country that they know how to play a little football.

It didn't take long for the FCS to flex its muscle this season.

Last week, eight FCS teams knocked off opponents from the Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) -- the most wins ever for the lower division in one weekend. The FCS' weekend was highlighted by Eastern Washington upsetting No. 25 Oregon State and two-time defending FCS champion North Dakota State shocking reigning Big 12 champion Kansas State.

Colorado knows all too well that FCS teams are no pushovers, and the Buffaloes are going to get another reminder this week.

On Saturday, the Buffs will host Central Arkansas at Folsom Field. CU is 1-2 against FCS schools -- and barely got the win -- and UCA might be the best lower-division opponent the Buffs have ever faced. UCA is ranked No. 6 in the country in the latest FCS poll.

"They're similar to an Oregon -- fast tempo, throw the ball all over the place, run the ball really well, the quarterback is a dual threat guy," CU head coach Mike MacIntyre said shortly after his team knocked off Colorado State on Sunday night. "It's going to be a tough, tough battle and we're going to start working on them tonight."

FBS schools have made a habit of bringing FCS teams into their buildings. It's generally a win-win situation for both schools. The FCS schools get a decent chunk of money to make the trip -- CU paid Sacramento State \$460,000 to come to Boulder last year and will give UCA \$390,000 to make the visit this year -- while the FBS school generally gets an easy win.

Generally.

For the most part, FBS schools dominate their lower-level brethren. Last weekend was the best weekend the FCS has ever had against the FBS, but still lost 22 of the 30 games they played.

Because of that -- and because the FCS schools often aren't well-known -- the general public thinks these games are cake-walks.

"The tough thing about an FCS game is everybody thinks you're going to kill them," MacIntyre said. "You have to make sure the outside perception doesn't creep into your kids. When they watch the film, they'll realize real fast (that Central Arkansas is good)."

This will be CU's fourth matchup against an FCS program. The Buffs lost to Montana State in 2006 and Sacramento State in 2012.

In 2008, they defeated Eastern Washington, but barely, 31-24. CU trailed 24-17 with under three

minutes to play. The Buffs tied the game with 2:05 to go and then got a 27-yard interception return for touchdown from Cha'Pelle Brown moments later to escape with the win.

Central Arkansas has never defeated a school from one of the power conferences, going 0-3, but the Bears aren't likely to back down this week. They rolled Incarnate Word 58-7 in their opener last week and have FCS national title hopes. This is a talented and confident team.

"They're going to come in there thinking they can win, there's no doubt, and they should think they can win," MacIntyre said. "We've got to regroup and then we've got to go play really, really well to beat them."

Most outsiders probably expect the Buffs to win, especially after how good they looked in Sunday's 41-27 victory over Colorado State. Considering the knack FCS schools have for spoiling the party, though, MacIntyre said his team will take Saturday's game very seriously.

"It's a really fun challenge because it's going to prepare us for our conference, with all the spread teams," MacIntyre said. "They're good. I wish they weren't as good as they are, to be honest with you."

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When/where: Saturday, 6 p.m., at Folsom Field

TV/Radio: Pac-12 Network/850-AM KOA

The Bears at a glance

2013 record: 1-0

2012 record: 9-3, lost in 2nd round of FCS playoffs

Last week: Defeated Incarnate Word, 58-7.

Head coach: Clint Conque, 14th year (99-54)

Key players: LB Justin Heard, 6-2, Sr.; WR Dezmin Lewis, 6-4, Jr.; DB Jestin Love, 6-0, Sr.; QB Wynrick Smothers, 6-1, Sr.; WR Jatavious Wilson, 5-9, Fr.; DL Jonathan Woodard, 6-6, So.

Notable: Central Arkansas is ranked No. 6 in the FCS Top 25 rankings. ... UCA has been to the FCS playoffs the past two seasons. ... Smothers was Southland Conference offensive player of the year in 2012. ... Wilson had 215 all-purpose yards in his collegiate debut (105 receiving, 2 TD; 93-yard kickoff return for TD) on Saturday. ... The Bears moved up to Division I in 2006.

Football: CU Buffs' Paul Richardson honored by Pac-12 after stellar performance

By Kyle Ringo Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

Buffzone.com

Colorado wide receiver Paul Richardson was named Pac-12 Conference Offensive Player of the Week on Monday in voting done by media who cover the league.

Richardson returned to the Buffaloes' lineup on Sunday after missing the 2012 season with a knee injury. The junior caught 10 passes for 208 yards and two long touchdowns covering 82 and 75 yards.

Richardson lined up in the backfield on the second offensive play for the Buffs before going in motion. The Rams blew the coverage and left him all alone down field and quarterback Connor Wood found him for the first points of the game. Richardson added the nightcap in the fourth quarter when he blew by a CSU defender and caught a deep throw in stride along the sideline in CU's 41-27 victory.

It was Richardson's second 200-yard receiving day in his career. He has produced two of the four 200-yard receiving performances in CU history.

Tra'Mayne Bondurant earned the Defensive Player of the Week of the award after leading Arizona to a 35-0 shutout in its opener against Northern Arizona. Cal placekicker Vincenzo D'Amato is the special teams Player of the Week. He accounted for a career high 18 points and threw a touchdown pass on a faked field goal.

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CU Buffs QB Connor Wood hopes to build upon excellent season opener

By John Henderson The Denver Post The Denver Post

Posted:

DenverPost.com

Don't Mess with Texas. Connor Wood did.

Now, Don't Mess with Colorado.

It took more than two years, but Wood showed Buffaloes fans why Texas coach Mack Brown once saw him as his future star quarterback. On a day that bounced a football program like a person on a bungee jump heading upward just after it hits rock bottom, Wood had a game for the ages Sunday night against Colorado State.

He became only the third Colorado quarterback to throw for 400 yards in a season opener. His three touchdown passes, including two bombs to Paul Richardson, were more than just the driving force of the 41-27 victory.

It represented a new beginning, not only for new coach Mike MacIntyre but for an offense that spent last year shuffling quarterbacks as much as its feet.

"He played like a grown man," Richardson said. "I was so proud of him."

The return of Richardson from a torn ACL, which cost him the 2012 season, made a difference. Also, Nelson Spruce found enough open space for eight catches as CSU's secondary shifted its coverage to Richardson.

Throw in a shuffled, yet jelled, offensive line and creative play-calling by new offensive coordinator/quarterbacks coach Brian Lindgren, and Wood took over. The junior stayed poised in the face of frequent blitzes. His 33-of-46 (.717) passing gave him the second-most attempts in school history without an interception.

"I was really impressed with Connor," MacIntyre said. "That's what we've been seeing. I knew he had the ability to do it."

It wasn't just the two bombs to Richardson, which were as much due to CSU brain locks as Wood's arm. He engineered scoring drives of 69, 63 and 51 yards. His best pass of the day may have been on third-and-10 from the Rams' 18. With 3:56 left in the first half, he threaded the needle past a CSU defensive back to D.D. Goodson in the corner of the end zone for a 17-3 lead.

"It's a new and improved Connor," Wood said. "I give all the credit to the coaches for my confidence and my teammates rallying around me. When I was named starter, they were all supportive and said, 'We have your back.' " Footnotes. Richardson was named the Pac-12 offensive player of the week for his 10 catches and 208 yards. Safety Tra' Mayne Bondurant of Arizona was the defensive player of the week (two interceptions), and kicker Vincenzo D'Amato of California was the special-teams player, accounting for 18 points and throwing a touchdown

pass.

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Eye on ...The Bears

Central Arkansas (1-0) at Colorado (1-0), 6 p.m. Saturday, Pac-12 Network

For the record: Central Arkansas opened with a 58-7 win over Incarnate Word, a Division II school in San Antonio transitioning to FCS.

Streaking: Under coach Clint Conque, Central Arkansas has had winning records 10 of the past 13 years and made the FCS playoffs the past two years.

Who's hot: Jatavious Wilson, a 5-foot-9, 171-pound freshman receiver from Bastrop (La.) High, debuted with 105 yards receiving and two touchdowns on four catches and returned a kickoff 93 yards for a touchdown.

Who's not: Central Arkansas fumbled three times, losing two.

Key stat: The Bears rolled up 537 yards total offense.

FYI: Central Arkansas is ranked sixth in the FCS. ... It won the Southland League last year after beating eventual national runner-up Sam Houston State. ... The Bears return 11 starters from a team that lost at Georgia Southern 24-16 in the second round of last season's FCS playoffs. ... In last year's season opener, they lost 49-27 at Mississippi. ... Junior kicker Eddie Camara is a Lindy's preseason FCS All-American. ... Central Arkansas is 0-9 all time against FBS schools or the historical equivalent at the time they played.

John Henderson, The Denver Post