



# Bufs expect 'familiarity' to serve them well

By B.G. Brooks

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Except to benefit the newcomers, there should be no need for introductions - to coaches, to his system and, maybe of most importance, to his expectations.

Preseason football camp No. 3 under coach Dan Hawkins begins today at the University of Colorado, and as sophomore offensive tackle Nate Solder noted Monday, "Familiarity with what he expects will make a big difference. Now people are starting to pick it up and taking it upon themselves (to do it)."

That is among Hawkins' chief hopes, as the Buffaloes eye further progress for a program that has posted eight wins in two seasons (2-10, 6-7). Hawkins believes an upgrade in that area is coming, but, he adds, proof will come soon enough: "We'll see once we get out and start playing."

Except for a spate of offseason arrests he claims "really upset me," Hawkins "feels good about everything" that has preceded his third season.

"I'm one of those whole-picture guys - I like what we're doing in the weight room, the classroom . . . we're definitely headed in the right direction," he said. "But we've got to get some guys who have a real passion for leadership, a real ability to lead."

The Bufs will begin camp with no captains designated - atypical for a Hawkins-coached team. He usually has players vote on their captains before or during spring drills, but that vote will be taken near camp's conclusion.

Why the delay? He said he and the team have "spent a lot of time defining leadership . . . who a captain is, what his role, obligation and duties are, then trying to get the (team) to figure out who those guys are."

Strong offseason leadership from seniors such as safety Ryan Walters and defensive tackles George Hypolite and Brandon Nicolas, and even underclassmen such as offensive tackle Ryan Miller and starting quarterback Cody Hawkins, has helped bridge the gap until a formal vote is taken.

Solder, making a much-anticipated move from tight end to the critical left-tackle spot, said summer work's intensity was noticeably ratcheted up by strength-and-conditioning coach Jeff Pitman.

"On some of the runs, we would do twice as many hills," said the 6-foot-8 Solder, who has reached his offseason goal of 300 pounds.

Tangible camp improvements Dan Hawkins hopes to see before the Aug. 31 opener against Colorado State (5:30 p.m., Invesco Field at Mile High) include working on turnovers (fewer committed, more

created), generating a more consistent pass rush, increasing third-down efficiency, upgrading the rush offense/defense, and bettering special- teams play.

Anything else?

"Our whole mentality . . . our sense of urgency, how we're moving, our intensity," he said.

Meanwhile, Megan Rogers, CU's director of football administration, has been hired by Nebraska as director of on-campus recruiting. Only the second woman to work in that position at CU, Rogers was "recruited" to the Cornhuskers by former Bufs assistant Shawn Watson, now Nebraska's offensive coordinator.

Hawkins, who appointed Todd Ritter as Rogers' successor, conceded he was surprised by her leaving to work for a Big 12 Conference "rival."

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