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cu football

Eye on ... The Longhorns

Article Last Updated: 09/28/2008 11:35:04 PM MDT

Texas at Colorado, 5 p.m., Saturday, FSN

For the record: Texas (4-0) moved up two places this week in the coaches (USA Today) and media (Associated Press) polls to No. 5. The Longhorns received one first-place vote in the coaches poll.

Streaking: Texas has won its three home games, against Florida Atlantic, Rice and Arkansas, by identical scores of 52-10.

Who's hot: Junior quarterback Colt McCoy has thrown for 14 touchdowns against just one interception. Against Arkansas, he was 17-of-19 for 185 yards, three touchdowns and no picks.

Who's not: It's hard to quibble, with Texas coming off a rout of Arkansas, but the Texas defense has only two interceptions for the season against opponents that had to throw the ball to play catch-up.

Colorado Football

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Key stat: Texas has outscored its opponents 111-29 in the first half.

FYI: Cody Johnson became the first freshman running back in school history to rush for a touchdown in each of his first four games. That is surprising considering the top backs produced by the Longhorns, including Heisman winners Earl Campbell and Ricky Williams.

Injuries: Tailback Fozzy Whittaker has missed the Longhorns' last two games with a knee injury. Tight end Blaine Irby is out for the season with a knee injury suffered against Rice in the third game.

Coachspeak: "We've played with energy each week. We've played hard each week. And we've seemed to improve each week. Now, the stage steps up (entering Big 12 play) and the teams we start playing will be better than the first four we've played." — Texas coach Mack Brown, after Saturday's 42-point victory over Arkansas

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CU report: Miller out for season

By Brad Byler, Special to the Rocky

Sunday, September 28, 2008

Sophomore right tackle **Ryan Miller** is lost for the season after fracturing his left fibula against Florida State on Saturday, the University of Colorado sports information department confirmed. CU will look into applying for an injury hardship for Miller to give him another season of eligibility.

Texas, CU's next opponent, also lost a player for the season Saturday.

Senior fullback **Luke Tiemann** will have surgery to repair a torn anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee suffered in the Longhorns' 52-10 win against Arkansas.

FOREVER YOUNG

Senior free safety **Ryan Walters** is one of the few players left on the CU team who saw action the last time the Buffaloes played Texas in a regular-season game. The Buffs lost 42-17 in Austin, Texas, and Walters, a redshirt freshman at that time, has vivid memories of Texas quarterback **Vince Young**.

"He was probably the best college football player I've seen in person," Walters said. "He kind of tore us up, but they are a different team and we are a different team, so it'll be a good game on Saturday. They are a prestigious program, but you get that a lot playing here. We face a lot of big-time schools."

© Rocky Mountain News



70-3 still lingers with Buffs

Scott recruitment adds to intrigue of Texas game

By Kyle Ringo

Monday, September 29, 2008

There is plenty of intrigue in the recent history between the Colorado football program and its next opponent, the Texas Longhorns.

Some of it is several years old now. Some is still fresh from the past 12 months. Whether any of it matters much when the Buffs host the fifth-ranked Longhorns on Saturday (5 p.m., FSN) is a matter of opinion. At worst, it will make for an interesting week of buildup.

The last time these teams met on the gridiron was a historic day in college football. Texas pounded the Buffs 70-3 in the 2005 Big 12 Championship game, setting a record that might stand for decades as the most lopsided Division I championship game in history. The Dec. 3, 2005, contest was the finale for coach Gary Barnett at CU and a crowning moment for his good friend, Texas coach Mack Brown.

Barnett was fired the next week, in part, for the embarrassing way his team performed down the stretch that year, and, in part, because of several years of scandalous innuendo and allegations that plagued his program without much proof behind them.

The Buffs had spent the week leading up to that game focused on building team unity, believing they needed everyone on the same mission to have a chance against the No. 2 ranked Longhorns. Longtime linebackers coach Brian Cabral said the Buffs truly believed they could compete with Texas that day.

"I think we felt like we could, but I also think we didn't understand emotionally, everything that we had been going through," Cabral said. "Looking back, that's easy to say, but at the time, I think we thought we could. Just like everything else we were doing at that time, we were fighting through everything. We felt like we could fight through that also and didn't see that coming at all."

The negativity of the period had taken a toll on recruiting and it was exposed that day, more than any other, in the final score. The Buffs had gone from a top-25 ranking in mid-November to three straight losses by the combined score of 130-22.

Wide receiver Patrick Williams was just a youngster at the end of his redshirt freshman season staring at the scoreboard in Reliant Stadium in Houston in utter disbelief.

"I can remember looking up in the third quarter thinking, 'Man, they might score a hundred. We got to stop these guys,' " Williams said. "That was a very good football team and I take my hat off to them, but I have never felt more embarrassed. My family was there and that was a big-time game on a big stage."

There are only a handful of Buffs, nine to be exact, left on the roster who played that season. Two CU

assistant coaches, Darian Hagan and Cabral also were involved. All of them believe the 70-3 whipping will be of little consequence this week when the Longhorns come to Boulder, but some are willing to admit it's going to be on their minds.

Hagan, who played quarterback for CU 20 years ago and bleeds black and gold, might be the most honest about how that game has stuck with him. Some around CU remember it as the finale for former quarterback Joel Klatt, CU's career passing leader, who was knocked out late in the game by a blitzing defender when the outcome was long since decided.

Klatt had to be taken to the hospital, suffered a severe concussion and wasn't cleared to play in the Champs Sports Bowl more than three weeks later.

"I remember warming up and those guys were laughing and joking over there," Hagan said of the Longhorns, then led by quarterback Vince Young. "They didn't respect us. We thought we could go in there and hang with them. Never in my wildest dreams did I think it would be 70-3. And then in the fourth quarter, blitzing and piling it on, I didn't think that would happen, but it did.

"What they did was pretty much try to clown us on a national stage, but you can't carry that. We have to let it roll off our back, but it's going to be in the back of our minds, I can tell you that."

Brown was asked this summer at Big 12 media days what he will expect from his first encounter with the Buffs and their fans since 70-3. He found his way around the question.

"The air will be light, I know that," he said. "It will be full cause it's been full every time we've been up there. There is enough Texans that move to Colorado for the summer so there is a natural rivalry between the two. And Dan has done a good job and they're competitive. So it will be like it is everywhere else we go to play."

Senior captains Ryan Walters and Daniel Sanders said they hope to replace that Texas memory with a new one this week. Upsetting another top-five team in Folsom Field the way they beat then-No. 3 Oklahoma last season, would help to soothe the pain of that brutal beating three years ago.

"We moved on. You know, it's better that way," Walters said. "It was embarrassing. Any time you get a basketball number put up on you it's embarrassing. It's something you don't forget. Vince Young is a helluva player, you know?"

The 2005 championship game was the last time these programs met on the field, but they tangled in recruiting just this year when Darrell Scott, the No. 1 running back recruit in the nation, listed the two schools as finalists for his services.

He chose the Buffs on national television on national signing day to the dismay of Longhorns fans, who thought he was stolen away at the last minute. The truth is the Buffs had been recruiting Scott much longer and had developed a better relationship with him. It started when he was still a sophomore in high school and CU running backs coach Darian Hagan had started recruiting Scott's uncle, Josh Smith.

When Scott chose CU, disgruntled elements around the Texas program and a recruiting coordinator at Scott's high school claimed publicly that CU had cheated by offering Scott's mother a job in Boulder. The unfounded allegations infuriated members of the CU coaching staff, who found themselves defending their recruiting instead of celebrating their first top-20 class under Dan Hawkins.



First look: No. 5 Texas

Game 5

Matchup: Texas (4-0) at Colorado (3-1)

Game time: 5 p.m., at Folsom Field (53,750)

On the air: Fox Sports Net. KOA Radio (850 AM).

Web site:

www.texassports.com

The series

Texas leads 9-7 in a series that began in Austin on Sept. 28, 1940, with a Longhorns victory. Texas has won five of the past six and has a three-game winning streak against the Buffs. The programs have split six games played in Boulder.

Last time

On its way to the national championship, Texas trounced CU 70-3 in the 2005 Big 12 Conference championship game in Houston. It is one of the most famous outcomes in CU history for the lopsided result and the fact it came in a championship setting. The Buffs' only score came on a Mason Crosby 25-yard field goal in the first minute of the second quarter. After that point the Longhorns went on to score eight consecutive touchdowns in the second and third quarters.

The coach

Mack Brown is 107-25 in his 11th season at Texas and 193-99-1 in his 25th season as a college head coach. The Longhorns have won at least nine games in every season under Brown and have won at least 10 games in seven straight years.

Numbers game

210 -- The number of rushing yards the Longhorns have allowed in four games combined this season. Texas ranks second in the nation in rushing defense, allowing a paltry 53 yards per game and 2 yards per carry. The Longhorns haven't surrendered a rushing touchdown.

The lowdown

Texas ranks in the top 25 in 11 of the 17 major statistical categories tracked by the NCAA. ... The Longhorns have recorded 14 sacks in the past two games and rank No. 1 nationally. ... Colt McCoy

ranks second in the nation in passing efficiency and is 24-6 as the starting quarterback. ... While the Longhorns have been difficult to run against, they have given up 250 yards passing per game. ... In the past two games, senior receiver Jordan Shipley has made 13 catches for 238 yards and four touchdowns. ... The Longhorns have beaten three opponents by the score of 52-10 this season.

Who to know

QB Colt McCoy: After a tough sophomore season, he has become Mr. Do-it-all for the Longhorns. McCoy is completing 80 percent of his passes and has led the Longhorns in rushing the past two games. He's thrown 14 touchdown passes with only one interception and might be quietly working his way into the Heisman Trophy picture.

WR Quan Cosby: He has caught at least one pass in 35 consecutive games. He is averaging 5.5 catches and 86 yards a game as a senior. He made four catches for 52 yards as a freshman against the Buffs.

DE Brian Orakpo: The senior defensive end has recorded 5.5 sacks this season and 16 in his career. At Big 12 media days in July coach Brown said he has never coached a more talented defensive lineman.



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