



# Frosh QB Hansen could get start

## Bufs enter No. 16 Tigers' den today

By Kyle Ringo  
Friday, October 24, 2008

COLUMBIA, Mo. -- There is a reason to watch the Colorado football team tonight even if it means peering at the television at times through split fingers covering a wincing face.

Unless you've been in a coma the past week, you know Colorado coach Dan Hawkins added true freshman quarterback Tyler Hansen to a stagnant offense last Saturday against Kansas State, and Hansen helped lead the Buffs to a win with sophomore Cody Hawkins doing his part as well.

The two will share time under center once again this evening against No. 16 Missouri, and Hansen could make his first collegiate start.

The results should be a good gauge of where the program is heading into the rest of the season. Fans should get to see Hansen pass the ball more today than he did a week ago, when he completed seven of 14 passes for 71 yards and a touchdown. Missouri ranks 114th in the nation at defending the pass, and 100th overall in total defense.

Hansen also ran for 88 yards, which was the missing ingredient at the quarterback position this season.

"I just want the team to win," Hansen said this week. "Me and Cody both work good together. I think we give the team two different things that can help the team win. I think it's awesome."

The Buffs are trying to improve on a 4-3 overall record and take another step toward a second consecutive bowl season, but this doesn't figure to be a check in the win column.

From Day One this fall, most realistic observers viewed today's sold out Missouri Homecoming game in Faurot Field as a probable loss for the Buffs. That's just the simple truth and it remains the most likely outcome given the makeup of the two teams.

The Tigers are a veteran group with a slew of playmakers and a coaching staff that has remained intact for eight seasons. The Buffs are one of the nation's youngest teams --- now even younger with Hansen playing --- and still have plenty of holes remaining in the depth chart.

If not for conference championship games, the Tigers would have played for the national title last season. They have much of that team back this year, and they dispatched the Buffs with a flick last year in Boulder by a whopping 45-point margin.

Missouri features one of the elite offenses in the nation led by quarterback Chase Daniel, whom Dan Hawkins called "a surgeon" in the shotgun this week. It also has a defense that is capable of playing at a

high level when it is focused and determined. It ought to be both tonight (4:40 p.m. FSN) as it enters the game with a two-game losing streak.

On the heels of losses to No. 7 Oklahoma State and No. 1 Texas, the Tigers are eager to prove they still belong in the Big 12 Conference championship discussion despite their setbacks. The opening kickoff should be all the spark they need to begin making their case and working toward a second consecutive North Division title.

"Right now, the only thing on my mind -- and on our team's mind -- is 5:30 Saturday," Daniel said.

Even with Hansen's athletic ability added to the CU offense, the Buffs aren't likely to win a shootout with Daniel, wide receiver Jeremy Maclin, tight end Chase Coffman, tailback Derrick Washington and numerous other threats Tigers' coach Gary Pinkel has at his disposal. The Buffs haven't scored more than 14 points in conference play and haven't totaled more than 21 in the past five weeks.

So the Colorado defense must find a way to slow down the Tigers' fourth-ranked passing offense and fifth-ranked scoring offense and give its offense a chance. The good news is the CU defense has played well all year and has done its job for the most part, keeping the team in every game, at least into the fourth quarter.

"They're playing very, very good defense," Pinkel said of the Buffs. "That's certainly going to be a challenge for us."

Colorado defenders have said all week they believe they are up to the challenge, but if last season's contest is any kind of indicator. It doesn't look good. The Tigers amassed 598 total yards of offense against CU and scored 48 unanswered points.

"The formula is tackle," defensive tackle George Hypolite said. "They thrive off big plays. They create a lot of big plays."

"You know, Jeremy Maclin will catch the ball on the edge, make a few guys miss and then outrun them to the corner. Chase Coffman hurdles two guys, spin moves to the end zone. Chase Daniel keeps the play alive with his feet, 35-yard bomb for a touchdown. The biggest thing is eliminating explosion plays and stopping the run. And the way you eliminate explosion plays is tackle. When they catch the ball, we've got to tackle them."



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# Colorado vs. Missouri matchups

By Kyle Ringo

Saturday, October 25, 2008

**CU RUN OFFENSE VS. MU RUN DEFENSE --** Tailback Rodney Stewart is having himself quite a season for a guy few believed could play at this level a year ago. He's third in the nation in rushing among freshmen, averaging 85 yards a game and 5 yards per carry. The CU offensive line seems to be making some progress now that the same five players have been able to stay on the field together through most of the past three weeks. Adding freshman quarterback Tyler Hansen and his running ability to the mix will make the Buffs even better in this area, but teams are going to prepare for Hansen from now on. The Tigers play pretty well against the run and feature several future pros on defense, including linebacker Sean Weatherspoon, defensive tackle Ziggy Hood and safety William Moore. They are allowing 123 yards per game and 3.3 yards per carry. **Edge: EVEN.**

**CU PASS OFFENSE VS. MU PASS DEFENSE --** This might be the key area this week. The Buffs rank last in the Big 12 Conference in passing. They have thrown for fewer than 200 yards in six of their seven games this season and fewer than 100 yards in three of those contests. The Buffs lack consistent playmakers at wide receiver beyond Josh Smith and often have had to keep backs and tight ends in to help a young offensive line block. CU must avoid becoming predictable with its two-quarterback rotation and Hansen has to prove he can be effective in the passing game to really open up some opportunities. The Tigers rank last in the conference in pass defense and represent an opportunity for the Buffs to get things turned around. Missouri is the only Big 12 team to have allowed more than 2,000 yards passing and has given up a league-worst 15 touchdown passes. **Edge: CU.**

**MU RUN OFFENSE VS. CU RUN DEFENSE --** Three teams in the Big 12 are averaging more than 5 yards per carry and Missouri is one of them. Tailback Derrick Washington is the conference's third leading rusher right behind Stewart. Washington has scored 12 rushing touchdowns and is averaging 6.4 yards per carry. The Tigers ran for 201 yards against Nebraska, but have been held to 94 combined rushing yards in the past two games, both losses, to Oklahoma State and Texas. Colorado is allowing 160 yards a game and has struggled to stop the run at times this year. The Buffs have given up 150 or more yards in four of the past five games. The key here for CU is whether the defensive line can make some plays so the linebackers and defensive backs don't have to. If the secondary becomes too concerned about run support, it's going to be a long night. **Edge: MIZZOU.**

**MU PASS OFFENSE VS. CU PASS DEFENSE --** The Buffs are the best pass defense in the Big 12 and it's not like they haven't played a powerful schedule. The numbers are a little skewed because of the West Virginia game in which the Mountaineers passed for just 43 yards, but the Buffs have been pretty consistent here. They must stop big plays tonight and get off the field on third downs. It's tough getting pressure on quarterback Chase Daniel who is generally deep in the shotgun and gets rid of the ball quickly. He has been sacked only six times this season. The Tigers are loaded with talented and speedy receivers, especially tight end Chase Coffman, who caught three touchdown passes against CU last year and Jeremy Maclin, one of the nation's best wideouts. **Edge: MIZZOU.**

**SPECIAL TEAMS --** Missouri has one of the most consistent place-kickers in the nation in Jeff

Wolfert. He has never missed an extra point and he's kicked a ton of them for the Tigers. He's capable of making kicks from 55 yards out. The Tigers have one of the most dynamic talents in the country returning punts and kickoffs in Jeremy Maclin. He has four returns for touchdowns in his career and the way the Buffs coverage units have been this season, we'd hardly be surprised to see him take another one to the house. Missouri coaches have been instructing their punters to boot line drives away from the return man, and it has worked effectively. Josh Smith probably won't get a lot of opportunities there unless he does better than most at fielding awkward kicks. CU place-kicker Aric Goodman has missed six consecutive field goals and had two blocked this season. **Edge: MIZZOU.**

**COACHING** -- Missouri coach Gary Pinkel has beaten Dan Hawkins twice because he has had superior talent in both games and his entire coaching staff has remained the same for eight years now. That's a huge factor in the Tigers' success. Pinkel and his staff have been innovators with much of what they do offensively. Hawkins is dealing with a two-quarterback system on top of all the other issues caused by the bulk of his players being freshman and sophomores. He might have to pull out some tricks and make some bold decisions to upset Pinkel. He might be a year away still. **Edge: MIZZOU.**

**PREDICTION** -- Missouri 34-16

-- Kyle Ringo



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## Woelk: Grumpy Tigers a major test for young Buffs

Let's get down to the nitty-gritty right away:

Signs point to a long night in Missouri for the Colorado Buffaloes.

Not only are the Buffs not supposed beat the Tigers, they're supposed to get drilled.

Odds makers have installed MU as 24½-point favorites -- and that would actually be an improvement over last year's 55-10 whipping administered by Mizzou in Boulder. The Tigers slapped 48 unanswered points on the Buffs that day to hand Dan Hawkins his worst defeat as CU's head coach, and it's a game the Buffs haven't forgotten.

Certainly, nobody in the Midwest is giving the Buffs much of a chance. The Tigers -- ranked No. 3 in the nation just two weeks ago -- have suffered back-to-back losses, and the feeling in Mizzou is that they're ready to take it out on someone. Anyone.

The Buffaloes just happen to be in "anyone's" shoes. Clearly, the Tigers are grumpy. The team that harbored national title hopes has been forced to lower those goals considerably. Right now, MU players would be happy with a Big 12 North title and a shot in the conference title game.

"The team goals are friggin' out the window," said MU quarterback Chase Daniel, whose Heisman hopes are now on par with John McCain's White House dreams. "It's do-or-die time."

The general consensus is that the Buffs will be on the latter end of that ultimatum.

Here's what the Kansas City Star's Mike DeArmond wrote earlier this week:

"... the worst thing to be just now is a Colorado Buffalo ... it is the Buffaloes who may be on the list of endangered species ... (MU coach Gary) Pinkel has spent a week loading his team for bear, buffalo and any other animal unfortunate enough to stand in Mizzou's path."

Sounds ominous, eh?

The Buffs would be well-advised not to get caught up in any of the hype. This is the type of game the young Buffs should embrace: an opportunity to test themselves against one of the nation's best.

If they play the game they're capable of playing, they could make this a game worth remembering.

Of course, that starts with the defense, which has played reasonably well this year.

Today, however, "reasonably well" won't cut it. The Buffs haven't seen a team with this kind of

offensive firepower -- well, since last year. The Tigers can score from anywhere on the field, and they can do it in a variety of ways.

Two things must happen for CU to stay in the game defensively:

One, eliminate big plays. Easier said than done, of course, but if Colorado can force Mizzou to put together sustained drives, their chances of staying in the game will be enhanced dramatically.

Two, produce a pass rush. Mizzou's Daniel has been sacked just five times all year -- twice each by Oklahoma State and Texas, the two teams to beat MU. Daniel threw three interceptions under the pressure from OSU and another pick against Texas. If the Buffs can get to him today and force a turnover or two, it will make a major difference.

Offensively ... well, scoring some points would be nice. Colorado has scored just 14 points in each of its last three games, and the guess here is that the Buffs will need more than 14 to win today.

In that vein, Colorado needs to reduce its turnovers. The Buffs have given up the ball twice in every game this year -- and nine of those have come in opponents' territory. That's points off the board.

And, the Buffs will need solid quarterback play, from both of its signal callers. The addition of freshman Tyler Hansen to the mix has certainly enhanced CU's offensive potential, but the Buffs will also need Cody Hawkins to keep his head and make plays when the opportunity presents itself.

Today's game is without doubt a dangerous affair for the Buffs. What little momentum they established with last week's win over K-State could disappear in a hurry tonight.

But if they adhere to Dan Hawkins' mantra of simply improving every game, they have a chance to make this one interesting.



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## Colorado defense braces for Mizzou

By Patrick Ridgell  
Longmont Times-Call

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BOULDER — Making improvement demands brutal honesty. So when the Colorado Buffaloes began preparing a defensive plan for Kansas State last week, coaches owned up to a sobering reality from the previous game.

They weren't fooling Kansas quarterback Todd Reesing.

"I thought in the second half, he pretty much knew what we were doing," CU defensive coordinator Ron Collins said.

From that admission sprung the plan for last Saturday's 14-13 defeat of Kansas State. Collins and other Buffs said one big key was the ability to disguise their blitzes and coverages. Collins said it was CU's best effort in 2008, holding Kansas State 30 points below its average entering the day and holding quarterback Josh Freeman to 20-for-41 passing.

The Buffs face yet another ridiculous Big 12 offense today in Columbia, Mo., when they play the 16th-ranked Tigers (4:30 p.m., FSN), who average 45.9 points and 520.9 yards a game. CU's quarterbacking issues merited much attention in recent days, as they will today. But if the Buffs can't slow the Tigers, who scored 55 in Boulder last year, forget whatever happens under center.

As Collins said, CU tries to disguise defenses every week, so last weekend wasn't an epiphany. But it was the best job of disguising things the Buffs have pulled. Why did it come together against the Wildcats?

"I knew our kids had been playing well week in and week out in spurts. ... We talked all week about putting a four-quarter game together, and I think they practiced that way last week," Collins said.

"I thought going into the Kansas State game we needed to challenge our kids to change things up a little bit."

Safety D.J. Dykes said the defense is starting to get comfortable with the schemes like it did during one stint in 2007, when the Buffs held Florida State to 16 points, then shut out Miami (Ohio), and then beat Oklahoma and Baylor.

"I think that's something we're in now," Dykes said. "Things will start clicking. We're going to start getting on the same page as a defense."

Dykes said he believes he and the entire defense blitzed more last week than at any time in 2008. Those blitzes came from different places, and they weren't predictable.



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### Call of the day

I may not be the brightest bulb in the fixture, but I finally figured out how to avoid the robo call.

 10.22.08

While walking the Golden Ponds pathways in the park yesterday, I encountered a delightful gentleman, who was also walking the paths and picking up all the cigarette butts he could find.



Obviously, coaches and players won't reveal if that's the plan for today, no matter how effective those blitzes were a week ago. Against Missouri's offense and quarterback Chase Daniel, a senior whom CU will never have to face again, blitzing might not be the best strategy.

"(Daniel) knows what he's doing; he's been playing for four years. ... He's seen just about everything," CU defensive tackle George Hypolite said. "It's going to be difficult, but if we can keep him out of the pocket, keep him moving so he can't really set his feet and settle down and throw, and now he's throwing on one leg and throwing on the run, that'll also help."

Patrick Ridgell can be reached at [pridgell@times-call.com](mailto:pridgell@times-call.com).

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# Rocky Mountain News

## CU report: First - for now

By **B.G. Brooks**, Rocky Mountain News ([Contact](#))

Published October 24, 2008 at 7:20 p.m.

**BOULDER** — It's been a long, uphill climb for the Buffaloes pass defense, but players know how quickly a fall can occur.

In final national rankings since 2003, CU has been 114th, 105th, 87th, 94th, and 73rd against the pass. Through seven games this season, the Buffs are No. 1 in the Big 12 Conference, No. 54 nationally, allowing 201.0 passing yards a game.

"It's not surprising, at least not to me, because that's what we wanted to do," cornerback **Cha'pelle Brown** said of the ascent to No. 1 in the Big 12. "We've just got to keep it up, because we've got a long ways to go (in the season). We talked about it (Wednesday); no matter where we are now, we'll see at the end of the season if we're still No. 1."

Brown said the secondary - usually composed of fellow corner **Gardner Mc Kay** and safeties **Ryan Walters** and **D.J. Dykes**, with **Jalil Brown** the nickel back - is a veteran group that developed chemistry during spring drills and has stuck together.

"We have a lot of veterans (Jalil Brown is a sophomore, Cha'pelle a junior, Walters and Dykes are seniors) who have been in the system for three years," Cha'pelle Brown said. "We don't

have any excuses."

He called today's game against high-powered Missouri "a big, big test. They've beaten us the last two years, so we've got to go in there and get us a win."

### Tales of two QBs

Coach **Dan Hawkins** "hates" using two quarterbacks, but he's done it in coaching stops at the College of the Siskiyous, Willamette and Boise State. What's more, he said, "It worked out OK."

"We maybe threw it a little more than wanted, or ran it more than wanted, but that's what you did. You wanted to win, but you wanted to be balanced. It's just a delicate situation for a lot of reasons . . . but it's much smoother to have one guy."

### O-line update

Offensive line coach/running game coordinator **Jeff Grimes** says overall improvement he's seen in his unit over the past two weeks is attributable to working harder in practice and playing more physical in games.

"They've gotten after it," Grimes said. "In the offensive line, there are a lot of things you have to do right, but playing tough, playing physical and being determined to get your job done . . . can make up for a lot of other deficiencies."

Grimes compared pass protection to a golf swing

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or fly-casting: "There are a lot technical things to go into doing one thing right. Guys have gotten better, but we're still not as consistent as we need to be in doing those things. Once we get more consistent, we'll take another step."

Redshirt freshman **Eugene Goree**, who subbed in at right guard last week, is back on defense but could return to offense if needed.

Redshirt freshman **Ethan Adkins** continues to try and make up for time lost because of a monthlong disciplinary suspension and now is Grimes' first substitute at guard or tackle.

## Now, there's one

Half of Missouri's superb tight end tandem has departed, but CU's defense doesn't catch much of a break from the guy remaining.

For the past three seasons, the Buffs had to contend with **Martin Rucker** and **Chase Coffman**, who combined for 36 catches, 302 yards and seven touchdowns against CU.

Rucker has moved on to the NFL (Cleveland), but the 6-foot-6, 255-pound Coffman remains - and he's having an All-American season. He has 56 receptions for 694 yards and four touchdowns, including 23 for 244 yards and a score in his past two games.

"There's not enough good things I can say about him; he's a great player," Dykes said. "Yeah, it's nice not to have to face Rucker and Coffman, but they have enough talented receivers to be able

to spread you out.

"They've still got Coffman and **Jeremy Maclin** lining up next to him or on the other side on every play."

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## QB Hansen ahead of schedule at CU

**Freshman makes positive impression; second test is today**

By **B.G. Brooks**, Rocky Mountain News ([Contact](#))

Published October 24, 2008 at 12:38 p.m.



Photo by Cliff Grasmick/Boulder Daily Camera

CU quarterback Tyler Hansen scrambles for a gain against Kansas State.

Not long after preseason camp began, members of the University of Colorado's No. 1 defense began talking among themselves and sizing up Tyler Hansen, a freshman quarterback.

When game-planning began for opening opponent Colorado State, Hansen directed CU's scout team offense, an assignment that would

continue for the next five weeks - and would be carried out very well.

"He made us work every day," junior cornerback Cha'pelle Brown recalled. "If we had tight coverage, he'd run it. If we came up to play the run, he'd pass. He did it all.

"We talked about him and said he was going to be a good quarterback (but) we thought it would be next year when he got into games and did what he did last week. But, hey, they took the redshirt off of him and he played pretty good."

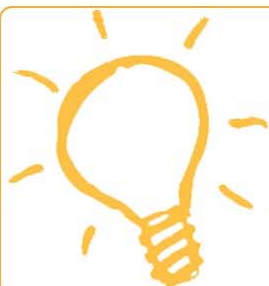
The player Hansen most reminded Brown and his buds of? Todd Reesing, the elusive Kansas quarterback who has posed unsolvable problems for the Buffaloes in their past three meetings - all CU losses.

Over time, if Hansen can equal what Reesing's done for the Jayhawks, the Buffs might have made a program-turning discovery.

After debuting a week ago against Kansas State and playing a major role in CU's 14-13 victory, Hansen's encore comes today at Missouri. Although he's expected to share time with sophomore Cody Hawkins, a 19-game starter, Hansen might end up getting the bulk of the work against the No. 16 Tigers, who seek to break a two-game losing streak.

Hansen enters this game with more offense at his disposal than last week. But his introduction to more of the playbook led to a few more mistakes - most expected - in practice, said

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offensive coordinator/quarterbacks coach Mark Helfrich.

Nevertheless, Hansen will have the opportunity to make more "full-field reads" as opposed to the "progressions" that dominated last week's plan, said Helfrich. "We're trying to advance that based on what Missouri does defensively and allow (Hansen) to at least try those options."

The 6-foot-2, 205-pound Hansen is all for it: "I'm definitely feeling better about it all, and they're definitely working in more plays. I'm getting more of a grasp of things."

Hansen is "not fragile mentally or excitable," Helfrich said, adding the difference between how his new quarterback approached last week and this is minimal.

"He's a pretty level-headed guy . . . not a guy who seems to have those peaks and valleys emotionally - which is a good thing."

It's also a very good thing that Hansen followed Helfrich's advice and, despite six weeks of scout team duty, remained attentive in meetings and, when possible, focused on the Buffs offense as well as their opponent's.

Prolonged scout team work can be an obstacle for some freshmen expecting to redshirt, said Helfrich: "A lot of times, guys will go through a fall camp phase in our offense and almost check out mentally for their redshirt year."

"But (Hansen) did a very good job of retaining

what we did in fall camp and being able to execute it, which is big. You want everybody to do that, you tell everybody to do that. But sometimes when you're redshirting, you can go into that mode - and most guys do."

Hansen didn't, and Helfrich called it "a tribute to his character and mind-set of what he wants to be as a player and a quarterback."

Among Hansen's major challenges today will be keeping his offense on the field and Missouri's - which averages 45.9 points a game - on the sideline. Time of possession looms large, according to CU safety D.J. Dykes, who said, "It's going to be huge for us to have the ball as long as we possibly can."

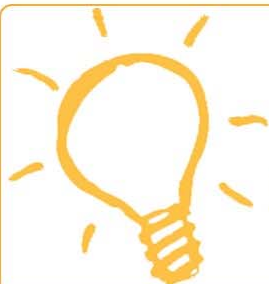
Added Brown: "It'll help a lot, but whichever way it goes, we've got to do our job."

CU's defense, which played its most complete game last weekend, was inspired by Hansen's play, according to Dykes.

"It was a spark, (but) Cody's done a great job; we're not down on Cody at all," he said. "We were just looking for a little spark on offense, something where we might be able to control the clock a little more and (Hansen) kind of added that element to the running game."

"It gets you fired up to see someone doing a good job out there. You see what we can do when the offense holds the ball for a couple of minutes; you see how we can put together a complete game. We're all in this together."

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