

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

colorado

Offense getting offensive

Bufs stuck in scoring doldrums amid Big 12's epic touchdown production

By Tom Kensler
The Denver Post

Article Last Updated: 10/31/2008 02:39:52 AM MDT



Colorado needs to accomplish a lot more scoring as Jake Behrens did against Texas earlier this month to remain competitive in the Big 12. (Doug Pensinger, Getty Images)

BOULDER — The bottom line for the anemic Colorado offense is not a need to block better, run better, pass better or catch better.

The bottom line is, well, the bottom line: points.

"We have to find a way to get into the end zone," CU offensive coordinator Mark Helfrich said.

Colorado (4-4, 1-3 Big 12) is threatening to add points to the state's endangered list. The Buffaloes enter Saturday's game at Texas A&M (3-5, 1-3) averaging 10.5 points for four conference games. Next worst in the league, Baylor, averages almost double that (20.2). Seven teams are scoring 30 or more points in Big 12 play.

The Buffs were fortunate to squeak out a 14-13 victory over Kansas State. Don't count on that happening again. Not in the

Colorado Football

- [View slide show of CU-Kansas football](#)
- [View slide show of Texas-CU football](#)
- [View slide show of CU-Florida State football](#)
- [View slide show of West Virginia-CU football](#)
- [Visit the CU Stats Page for boxscores, Big 12 standings, team leaders and more](#)
- [Visit Tom Kensler's All Things Buffs blog for a behind-the-scenes look at CU sports](#)
- [Play Pick'em for the upcoming CU football game](#)

Big 12, where scores resemble something from a video game. CU's win over Kansas State is the only time in 24 conference games played when the

Advertisement

FACTORY OVERSTOCK BLOWOUT!

Leather High-Back
\$219



Leather Mid-Back
\$199



Bookcases Various Sizes
\$149-\$259



2-Drawer Lateral File
\$399





OFFICE LIQUIDATORS
Profit From Our Experience

11111 W. 6th Ave/ LAKEWOOD
Between Kipling & Simms

303-759-3375
www.OfficeLiquidators.com

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

winning team scored fewer than 20 points. More than half the time (13 of 24 games), the winning team has reached 40 points. Almost a third (seven times) have reached 50.

Big 12 coaches still can't believe it, especially those who recall the days when Big Eight/Big 12 teams won with a running attack and stingy defense.

"We used to think that 50 points was a blowout," Texas coach Mack Brown said. "Now, that's happening every week."

Brown added that "it puts tremendous pressure on the defenses." True. But what about the pressure faced by offenses to keep pace on the scoreboard? Oklahoma, Kansas State and Iowa State have each scored 35 points in a conference game and lost.

"We're probably not to the point where we can outscore people 51-50," CU offensive line coach Jeff Grimes said. "But we've got to get to the point where we're going from 14 points to 24 or 27 or 31, or something like that."

The Buffs need two victories in their final four regular-season games to become bowl-eligible. Nothing figures to come easy, but a Nov. 15 home game against Oklahoma State and the Nov. 28 finale on the road against Nebraska could be particularly challenging.

Without giving away this week's game plan, Helfrich said "considerable changes" have been made to jump-start the offense. Gadget plays, perhaps?

"We had a couple against Missouri that we didn't end up using, based on the situation," Helfrich said. "So we just kept them in our pocket for down the road."

In practices this week, Colorado has blasted

artificial noise (recording of jet engines) to simulate the crowd at Texas A&M's Kyle Field, which is regarded as the Big 12's loudest.

"I definitely need to stay calm," said freshman quarterback Tyler Hansen, who will share time with Cody Hawkins. "Going into the environment at Missouri (his first college start), I was stressed a little bit. I rushed things. A couple of things I usually see, I didn't. I can't let that happen."

Sophomore receiver Josh Smith says the Buffs now know how to fight through their lowest moment, the 58-0 loss at Missouri.

"We're learning a lot," Smith said. "It's going to trickle over for us doing real well when we hit our stride."

Whether that happens in time to earn a bowl bid remains to be seen.

Tom Kensler: 303-954-1280 or
tkensler@denverpost.com

The lowdown

By Tom Kensler, The Denver Post

COLORADO (4-4, 1-3 Big 12)

Player to watch: WR Josh Smith.

One of CU's few breakaway threats, Smith ranks second among Big 12 players in all-purpose yards, behind only Missouri All-American Jeremy Maclin. But Smith has caught more than one pass in only one of the four conference games, when the sophomore averaged just 9 yards on four receptions against Missouri.

Key for Buffaloes: Touchdowns, touchdowns,

Advertisement

FACTORY OVERSTOCK BLOWOUT!

Leather High-Back
\$219

Leather Mid-Back
\$199

Bookcases
Various Sizes
\$149-\$259

2-Drawer Lateral File
\$399



OFFICE LIQUIDATORS

Profit From Our Experience

11111 W. 6th Ave/ LAKEWOOD
Between Kipling & Simms

303-759-3375
www.OfficeLiquidators.com

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

touchdowns.

Colorado has not scored more than two TDs in a game in more than a month — and that was just three, in an 18-point loss Sept. 27 to Florida State. There can be no excuses about the strength of the opponent this week. Texas A&M yields an average of 34.5 points.

TEXAS A&M (3-5, 1-3)

Player to watch: QB Jerrod Johnson.

Just Colorado's luck: The Buffaloes face another hot quarterback. At 6-feet-5, 229 pounds with good feet, Johnson has opened eyes since taking over for injured three-year starter Stephen McGee. Johnson passed for 381 yards Saturday in a 49-35 victory at Iowa State and is averaging 361 yards for his last three games.

Key for Aggies: Win the turnover battle.

Texas A&M ranks 11th among Big 12 teams in total defense for all games, yielding an average of 431.5 yards. But the Aggies have shown a propensity to pounce on fumbles. With nine fumble recoveries, Texas A&M ranks second in the league, behind 13 by Iowa State.

Advertisement

FACTORY OVERSTOCK BLOWOUT!

Leather High-Back
\$219



Leather Mid-Back
\$199



Bookcases
Various Sizes
\$149-\$259



2-Drawer Lateral File
\$399





OFFICE LIQUIDATORS
Profit From Our Experience
11111 W. 6th Ave/ LAKEWOOD
Between Kipling & Simms
303-759-3375
www.OfficeLiquidators.com

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

woody paige

Holy smoke! CU could go bowling

By Woody Paige
The Denver Post

Article Last Updated: 10/31/2008 01:15:54 AM MDT

Here's my pipe dream: The Buffs win their final four games for an 8-4 record, finish first (tiebreaker) in the Big 12's North Division with a 5-3 mark, beat Texas Tech in the conference championship in Kansas City, then go to a bowl and blow out Ricky Neuheisel.

Before you bombard the e-mail, voice mail and snail mail systems with "What are you smoking in that pipe?" skepticism, OK, that series of bizarre events can't happen.

UCLA won't be bowl-eligible.

OK, OK, the Buffs, in all probability, won't play in the Big 12 title game, and they likely won't capture the North.

But they can win their final four games and be invited to a good bowl in Tucson, San Antonio or even back in Shreveport, La. CU and I enjoyed ourselves at the Independence Bowl last New Year's Eve. Shreveport is a better place than Neuheisel's nowhere.

This is not some Halloween, Ichabod Crane, Headless Columnist treat-or-trickery.

Yes, I know what happened to the Buffaloes at Missouri last Saturday. And I watched the Florida State, Texas and Kansas defeats.

Nevertheless, these four are winnable — because of the opposition and because of what the Buffs can do.

Texas A&M lost at home to Kansas State, and Colorado beat Kansas State. Texas A&M lost at home to Arkansas State, and the Buffs have to be stronger than the Red Wolves, who are not the Red Raiders.

Iowa State is awful, as usual. The Buffs are 17-3 against the Cyclones in Boulder since 1967.

Admittedly, Oklahoma State and Nebraska are toughies for the Buffs.

The Cowboys have a coach who is a man, and the team is in the top 10 in the country and did beat Missouri but fell to the Longhorns, and the game is in Boulder, and the Buffs have dropped only one home game — to those same Longhorns — and have won 11 of the past 13 games against Oklahoma State.

The Cornhuskers have a coach who is a coach, and the game, per recent custom, is the day after Thanksgiving and will be played in Lincoln, a difficult town in which to win.

Except . . . Nebraska has lost two at home, to Virginia Tech, which isn't much, and to Missouri 52-17, which sounds a lot like CU's 58-0 defeat to the Tigers, except it was in Columbia.

So . . .

At least Colorado has gotten Texas, Kansas and Missouri out of the way.

Advertisement

FACTORY OVERSTOCK BLOWOUT!

Leather High-Back \$219

Leather Mid-Back \$199

Bookcases Various Sizes \$149-\$259

2-Drawer Lateral File \$399

OFFICE LIQUIDATORS
Profit From Our Experience

11111 W. 6th Ave/ LAKEWOOD
Between Kipling & Simms

303-759-3375
www.OfficeLiquidators.com

Print Powered By FormatDynamics™

denverpost.com

THE DENVER POST

I said before the season, and directly to Dan Hawkins, that the Buffs would be improved from their 2007 record of 6-7 — which included a respectable bowl showing against Alabama, and look where the Tide is now, and victories over Texas Tech, and look where the Red Raiders are now, and Oklahoma — but the record would be worse.

It doesn't have to be. The Buffs stole a victory from West Virginia and nudged Kansas State, two games they could have lost. Now, they have to beat two teams they should and two they shouldn't.

How?

Hawkins' bold decision to make freshman Rodney Stewart the feature running back over Darrell Scott and Demetrius Sumler has resulted in Stewart being on pace to rush for 1,000 yards.

Hawkins' bolder decision to un-redshirt (?) freshman quarterback Tyler Hansen has resulted in the shakeup of a stumbling, sagging offense and gives Colorado a potential quality quarterback for the next three seasons. Hansen is completing 63.3 percent of his passes and has run for 116 yards.

Hawkins, a creative man-coach, should consider a couple of other bold decisions. The Buffs could use more help at wide receiver. Why not insert cornerback Cha'pelle Brown on the other side occasionally? He looked sharp as a receiver on two interceptions this season. All he did as a senior in high school was catch 45 passes for 800 yards. His presence would eliminate the double coverage on Josh Smith. And how about bringing in 6-foot-1, 290-pound defensive tackle George Hypolite as a "Buffalo Back" on those (previously failed) third-and-goal and fourth-and-2 plays? All he did was rank as one of the two best high school fullback prospects in the West, rushing 36 times as a senior for 520 yards (14.4-yard average) and four touchdowns.

The late, great Eddie Crowder once made the boldest decision in a season — moving his all-conference quarterback to tailback. The Buffs won seven of nine after the change, and Bobby Anderson rushed for 254 yards against Alabama in the Liberty Bowl.

If Hawkins keeps making bold decisions, the Buffs can win their final four, and, OK, suppose what could happen.

Put that in your pipe and smoke it.

Woody Paige: 303-954-1095 or
wpaige@denverpost.com

Advertisement

FACTORY OVERSTOCK BLOWOUT!

Leather High-Back \$219	Leather Mid-Back \$199
Bookcases Various Sizes \$149-\$259	2-Drawer Lateral File \$399

OFFICE LIQUIDATORS
Profit From Our Experience
11111 W. 6th Ave/ LAKEWOOD
Between Kipling & Simms
303-759-3375
www.OfficeLiquidators.com

Print Powered By FormatDynamics™

Rocky Mountain News

CU report: QBs expect to be rotated against Texas A&

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

Published October 30, 2008 at 6:43 p.m.

BOULDER — As he watched unranked Texas A&M upset No. 12 Texas on national television last season at the Aggies' Kyle Field, **Tyler Hansen** couldn't help thinking, "Dang, I can't wait to play there."

He had no idea how soon he would get the opportunity.

Hansen, already committed to the Buffaloes a year ago, believed he would be wearing a redshirt when CU visits Texas A&M on Saturday.

Things change, greatly and unexpectedly.

After debuting two weekends ago against Kansas State, he made his first college start Saturday at Missouri.

Coach **Dan Hawkins** has declined to divulge whether Hansen will start again Saturday, but Hansen and sophomore **Cody Hawkins** say they expect to rotate again at quarterback.

Hansen believes he and his young teammates "matured" from their 58-0 loss to the Tigers, noting Hawkins told them, "Everyone is going to

get beat like that once in your lifetime, once in awhile.

"It was my first start, and it didn't go the way I wanted it to, but there's always stuff you can learn - and I learned a lot."

As for that much-anticipated trip to Kyle Field, "It's become a reality, and it's going to be fun," Hansen said.

BIG BOWL INCENTIVE

With CU two wins short of postseason eligibility (six victories), most observers believe Saturday's game is pivotal for the Buffs if they are to realize their bowl goal.

"That's our goal right now - get to a bowl game," Hansen said. "Get the wins, get there."

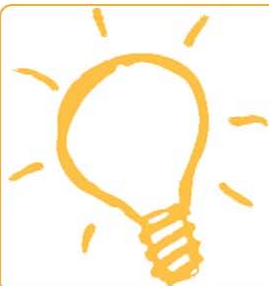
Then, he added a caveat that's in the back of most of the Buffs' minds: "Like 'Coach Pit' (strength and conditioning coach **Jeff Pitman**) told us, 'You don't get to a bowl game, you get an extra month of (offseason) conditioning.' "

COMMITMENT ON PACE

CU has five known commitments for 2009, but Dan Hawkins isn't concerned about that being a low number.

"Nah, we're about the same as we've always been," he said. "The whole commitment, decommitment, noncommitment, soft commitment, hard commitment . . . you know

Advertisement



A bright idea in online advertising.

PrinterStitial® ads by Format Dynamics.



FormatDynamics®

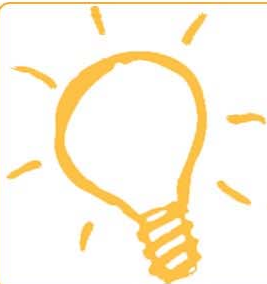
Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

Rocky Mountain News

what I mean?"

He said he's "happy" with the way his recruiting is progressing: "We're on some really good guys. . . . Most of the guys we're on, a lot of other good schools are on them, too. It's a dogfight."

Advertisement



A bright idea in online advertising.

PrinterStitial® ads by Format Dynamics.



FormatDynamics®

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

[Print page](#)[Close window](#)

Longmont, Colorado
Friday, October 31, 2008

Publish Date: 10/31/2008

Success on road eludes CU

Bufs hope to notch win at dangerous Kyle Field

By Patrick Ridgell

Longmont Times-Call

BOULDER — Seeing as Texas A&M is 1-4 at home in 2008, Kyle Field hasn't been quite as treacherous for visitors as in the past. But for the Colorado Buffaloes, it's another venue outside of the state, which means it's plenty formidable.

During coach Dan Hawkins' tenure at CU, the Buffaloes are 2-12 when they leave the state, including 0-3 in 2008. They'll go for win No. 3 Saturday against Texas A&M in College Station (noon, no TV). That record includes their neutral-site loss last December in Shreveport, La., to Alabama in the Independence Bowl. The two wins came in 2007, at Baylor and Texas Tech.

The mark does not appear to be a matter of frequent discussion. Defensive tackle George Hypolite didn't appear to know about it before a question broached the topic.

"Wow," he said, eyebrows raised.

But Hypolite had a few observations.

"There haven't been a lot of games, thinking back over my career, where we really got it handed to us, besides (last Saturday's) Missouri game and Kansas State last year," he said. "It's just cleaning up things. We have to tackle. We have to catch the ball when it's thrown to us; we have to make blocks when it's our job, be in our game when it's our job."

A couple of the Buffs' more memorable performances in recent years have come on the road. CU's 14-13 loss at Georgia in 2006 might have been its best effort that year. The Buffs' 31-26 win at Texas Tech last year was a bit of a surprise to those outside the program.

Obviously, winning away from home is never easy, especially at some Big 12 venues. CU's two wins in almost three years stand out, though, because of its success away from Folsom Field the past two decades.

With a road record of 59-41-1 since 1988, CU is 12th best in the nation away from home during the past 20 years, according to CU's weekly press notes. That mark does not include neutral-site games, like Big 12 title games, in which the Buffs are 1-3. CU is 23-27 on the road in the Big 12 since its inception.

Running backs coach Darian Hagan quarterbacked the Buffs to two wins at Oklahoma, including one in 1991 when the Sooners were ranked No. 12. He also was the quarterback in 1990, when CU won at No. 3 Nebraska. He sees a mentality that must be embraced.

ROAD WARRIORS

The nation's best on the road, 1988-2008:

1. Miami, Fla., 77-29, .726
2. Florida State, 70-28, .714
3. Ohio State, 68-27-2, .711
4. Michigan, 67-28-3, .699
5. Tennessee, 66-28-2, .698
6. Florida, 55-27-1, .669
7. Nebraska, 64-32-3, .662
8. Texas, 63-35, .643
9. Notre Dame, 61-34-2, .639
10. Southern Cal, 71-40-2, .637
11. Alabama, 59-36, .621
12. Colorado, 59-41-1, .589

Source: CU sports information

“Our guys, they’re young,” Hagan said. “We don’t have a lot of natural leaders. When I played, (when) we’d go on the road and play games against those teams like Nebraska and Oklahoma, we had older guys who were natural leaders.

“We weren’t intimidated by anybody. I’m not saying we are here. But the only person that we feared was coach Mac (Bill McCartney). You feared upsetting him. That fear brought out the best in you.

“The guys just need to not go out there wide-eyed. They just need to go out there and say, ‘We can win this game.’ If all 70 guys play together, play strong, play fast, do their jobs, trust the guy next to them that they’re going to do their job, they’ll be fine.”

Hawkins said CU’s road routine changes depending on the site and travel demands. With a large number of players who are making their collegiate debuts in 2008, he’s stressed the need to ignore distractions the road creates. He also points to the “void of emotion” traveling teams face when the home team does something well and its fans cheer like crazy.

Older players learn to turn that void into motivation. There might be a few Buffs still learning how.

“You start to get used to it, and it’s just another game,” senior safety D.J. Dykes said. “I like it. I like to feed off that energy that people are against you instead of for you. But it’s definitely something you have to get used to.”

Patrick Ridgell can be reached at pridgell@times-call.com.