



# Buff receiver Smith dreams big off field

## Sophomore makes music, designs clothing

By Kyle Ringo

Thursday, August 28, 2008

A young man in Missouri became a consensus All-American on the football field last fall catching touchdown passes as a wide receiver and injecting a little electricity into every punt and kickoff he handled.

By the end of the year, every college football fan with a pulse knew Jeremy Maclin was the standout all-purpose player for the Tigers.

Players across the nation aspire to have similar breakout seasons this fall. A member of the Colorado roster is looking more and more like he might fit the Maclin mold, at least on the field.

Off the field, Josh Smith is one of a kind.

Football is just one of his loves. Smith also is passionate about music and fashion, and he leaves no stone unturned in hopes of achieving his dreams.

At some point in the future, he would like to have a contract with a National Football League franchise, his own clothing line "Josh Fly" and shoe line "PF Fly's" and a record deal.

"I feel like I have a style and an image I want the public to get to know," he said.

Smith spent one of his off weeks from football and school this summer pursuing one of those dreams in the Phoenix area recording a CD with his good friend, Arizona State quarterback Samson Szakacsy.

They recorded eight rap tracks such as "Looka here" and "Monday to Sunday" and hope to land a recording contract. They plan to distribute the CD on their own regardless.

Smith said he has loved music all his young life. He first began to rap as a young boy watching his older brothers in Tallahassee, Fla., who were involved in the music business.

He raps mostly about personal experiences, some of which have been trying and troubling during a life in which he has moved around a lot.

"I guess going into my ninth grade year I kind of felt like I had a voice of my own and things inside of myself that I just wanted to put on a beat," he said.

CU coach Dan Hawkins has heard Smith's music and while he's not the world's biggest fan of the rap genre, he said he has enjoyed Smith's style and believes his young wide receiver might have a future in

that area if he chooses to put his focus there.

Smith first ventured into the pop culture world in high school when he would make clothes and shoes for friends. He bought Air Force One shoes and painted original designs on them. He made jersey dresses for girls and decorated an average pair of jeans with shoestrings.

Smith said he hopes to be able to delve into the fashion industry more seriously in the future. If his plans go well, he will use money made in football or from making music to fund what he would like to do with fashion.

His philosophy is simple and fits in well in Boulder where Hawkins loves eclectic personalities on the roster.

"Somehow if you don't live your dream, you die," he said. "If you're not trying to live all your dreams, then you're out here being someone that you're not even interested in being. You're just a zombie."

It's nearly football season with game day now just 72 hours away and Smith is focused on achieving his goal of becoming an All-Big 12 wide receiver this fall. It would be no small feat considering he plays in a pass-happy conference loaded with talented wideouts such as Maclin and Texas Tech sophomore Michael Crabtree.

Smith has looked explosive during training camp in all facets of the game. Whether he is running a reverse, catching a pass or returning kicks, he seems to be operating with a greater level of confidence that has allowed his physical ability to emerge.

No one has been more impressed than wide receivers coach Eric Kiesau.

"He hasn't reached his full potential yet, and when he does, that is what's going to be really scary," Kiesau said.

Colorado fans have been starved for a true consistent playmaker at wide receiver since the trio of D.J. Hackett, Derek McCoy and Jeremy Bloom left the program after the 2003 season. Smith showed signs of being that man last year, only his third full year in organized football.

Smith made 23 catches for 451 yards, an eye-opening 20-yard per catch. He never found his way to the end zone and is becoming annoyed that reporters keep finding it in their hearts to put that detail in stories about him. He's not the only Buff annoyed by it.

After a recent practice while Smith was being interviewed, quarterback Cody Hawkins interrupted to make this point.

"You need to lay off Josh and the whole he-hasn't-scored a touchdown thing," Hawkins said. "He probably had 297 in the offseason. He had enough touchdowns in the offseason to where no one is giving him flack."

He has spent the past year or so better known as Darrell Scott's uncle. Smith was routinely asked several times a day during the recruiting process that brought his star-running back nephew to Boulder, whether Scott would be a Buff.

He dealt with it and really hoped his nephew would join the program. Scott coming to Boulder has

probably aided Smith in relaxing and focusing on the details that will allow him to reach his potential.

At times last year when Smith would play six or seven plays in a row and begin to feel fatigued, he would tap his helmet asking to come out. This year in spring ball and fall camp, Kiesau has encouraged Smith to stay on the field and fight through the fatigue. He said Smith is responding well.

"I've actually stopped meetings and explained to the group the maturity level from last year to this year in Josh Smith," Kiesaud said. "I mean, he's a totally different guy."

"Last year in a meeting if I were to call him out on something or correct him, he would have 19 excuses on why I was wrong, not in an argumentative way. It's just that's how he did it. This year, he listens and writes it down and says, 'I gotcha coach.' And we move forward."



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## CU report: Hawkins stresses simplicity before opener

By B.G. Brooks

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**BOULDER** — For football coaches with two or more weeks to prepare for a game, the extra time offers a good news/bad news scenario.

The good news: The extra time presents the opportunity for more planning and attention to details. The bad news: The extra time presents the opportunity for “over-thinking,” a possibility Buffaloes coach **Dan Hawkins** wants to avoid.

In fact, Hawkins compared preparing for a season opener to preparing for a bowl game, which usually affords teams three or more weeks of practice before the postseason contest.

In contrast to over-thinking, Hawkins said “going the other way,” in the direction of simplicity, is preferable.

With the Buffaloes’ practices beginning to taper off before the Rocky Mountain Showdown against Colorado State on Sunday (5:30 p.m., Invesco Field at Mile High, FSN Rocky Mountain), Hawkins said final preparations would include “ratcheting it up in terms of details. Our overall mentality is good; I think we’re ready to go. But we’ll see on Sunday.”

### Awaiting word

Tailback **Brian Lockridge**, who got limited camp work while recovering from sports hernia surgery in the offseason, is holding out hope of being ready to play in the opener.

As of Wednesday, “I’m not playing ... but we’ll see on Sunday,” Lockridge said, noting he has been able to participate in limited contact work in recent practices.

### A day in the life of ...

Former CU quarterback **Joel Klatt**, now a college analyst for FSN Rocky Mountain, shadowed Buffs quarterback **Cody Hawkins** for a day during preseason camp, following the sophomore to team meetings and as he prepared for an afternoon practice.

Hawkins also was mic’d during the practice, allowing viewers to listen to information relayed from the sidelines.

*A Day in The Life of Cody Hawkins* airs at 10 tonight on FSN Rocky Mountain, with a replay scheduled for 5 p.m. Friday. A condensed version will air during the pregame report at 5 p.m. Sunday.

### **Early ‘tailgating’**

The Metro Denver Sports Commission and Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce are sponsoring a “Tailgate at Invesco” luncheon at noon Friday at Invesco Field at Mile High, featuring the head coaches -- CSU’s **Steve Fairchild** and Hawkins.

Tables for the luncheon are available. Information: **Kelsey Totura**, 303-534-0315, or [Kelsey@denversports.org](mailto:Kelsey@denversports.org).

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## Tale of tape a mystery to CU

**With new coach at CSU, Buffs unsure about Rams' plan of attack**

**By Natalie Meisler**  
*The Denver Post*

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New Colorado State football coach Steve Fairchild's game plan for Sunday's opener against CU has been like the Rams' scrimmages: hidden from the public. The Rams aim for an upset in the annual rivalry. (Nathan W. Armes, Special to The Denver Post)

FORT COLLINS — Football coaches instinctively watch tape. It's in their DNA.

They want to watch tape before even commenting on a game they've just watched for three hours. As for scouting their next opponent, coaches can't get enough tape.

Therein lies the rub for Colorado coaches. The only tape of Colorado State's offensive schemes is securely locked inside the computer hard drives in the offices of the Rams' coaches. That's because first-year CSU head coach Steve Fairchild isn't going to tip his hand.

"You look at what they did last year," said CU coach Dan Hawkins, whose Buffs meet the Rams on Sunday in Denver. "You look at what their (new) coaches have done before. At some point, you have to kind of prepare for the unknown: They might do this, they might do that. You just have to be ready to adjust."

But the CU staff, while armed with tape of returning CSU personnel, can't just tap one prior school. CSU did it two years ago when Hawkins came from Boise State, where his offense ran up big numbers.

There's no clear blueprint for CSU's staff, however. Fairchild spent the past seven years coaching in the NFL. Before that, he was on the CSU staff. Rams offensive coordinator Greg Peterson has been at Kansas State and Washington State. Line coach Pat Meyer brings an ACC flavor.

"Everyone has input," Peterson said. "If Steve presents an idea and someone has a better idea, we put it in. It's a collaborative effort."

In preseason practices, the Rams' backfield and receivers have been lining up everywhere. Going against a freshman scout team, everything works.

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That will likely change against a Big 12 defense.

Fairchild said he doesn't expect to have any advantage preparing for a team that has no idea what he will run.

"They could have a brand new defense and a brand new offense, too," he said of the Buffs. "There's always uncertainty with any opening game. You need to have a bunch of 'what-ifs' ready to go."

CSU has worked with some no-huddle offense, as much to get its defense ready for CU as to actually using it in games.

Former CSU quarterback Justin Holland is a regular at the Rams' practices these days, hoping to learn the coaching trade. He recalled establishing a rhythm early with star wide receiver David Anderson when he played against CU. He believes the unknown will be an advantage.

"With Coach Fairchild coming from the NFL, you don't know if he's taking a page from his old days at CSU or from Buffalo or St. Louis," Holland said.

Regardless of formation, the Buffs know to look for CSU tight end Kory Sperry, who scored three touchdowns against CU a year ago.

"If he doesn't have four, maybe people will think he hasn't played as well as a year ago," Peterson said.

"He did some damage to us last year, and he's going to enjoy some time in the NFL soon," CU senior safety Ryan Walters said. "I take it as a privilege to play against somebody of his caliber."

For all the talk of film study, CSU senior linebacker Jeff Horinek said it can be overrated. He pointed out that CSU studied Boise State film before the 2006 game, Hawkins' first season with the Buffs.

"The film didn't help at all," Horinek said. "We spent a lot of time on one look, and they gave us another."

*Staff writer Tom Kensler contributed to this report.*

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colorado football

## Brown playing valuable role as Buffaloes' nickel

By Tom Kensler  
The Denver Post

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BOULDER — With college defenses facing a greater number of spread offenses, nickel back has become almost a glamour position.

No longer must the fifth defensive back feel like a fifth wheel. Nickel backs stand squarely in the spotlight in today's pass-happy era, getting on the field for 60 to 70 percent of the defensive plays in a game, even more against some opponents.

It's no wonder Colorado sophomore Jalil Brown is smiling.

"With the nickel, it's a more difficult position," said Brown, who is listed as CU's starter at that spot for Sunday night's season opener against Colorado State. "You're sitting more in the center of the field (than cornerbacks), and you've got receivers coming at you who can go to the left or to the right. Corners are usually on one side of the field, so they have less ground to cover."

### Colorado Football

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- Darrell Scott
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- CU sports
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At 6-feet-1 and 210 pounds, Brown is one of CU's biggest defensive backs. Size matters for a nickel back, which also can draw some linebacker-like responsibilities.

"You have to show up for the run support and also be fast enough to cover receivers," Brown said Wednesday. "You have to be a little bigger than regular cornerbacks, and athletic at the same time."

Brown said he gained confidence by intercepting two passes in an August scrimmage. The Phoenix native served as a backup at cornerback and safety last fall and also excelled on special-team coverage units.

"Jalil has really improved," senior cornerback Gardner McKay said. "He's become more intelligent on the field. He knows what to do and what not to do. I think this will be a big year for him."

**Ready to go.**

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The Buffaloes "are relaxed, and I think their mentality is good and they're ready to go," coach Dan Hawkins said of his team's preparation for Sunday's game.

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college football

## CU's Moyd readying for spotlight

By Tom Kensler  
The Denver Post

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BOULDER — Colorado tailback Kevin Moyd, a fourth-year junior with only four career carries, has finally moved up the depth chart to where he might impact a game.

Listed as the top backup to starter Demetrius Sumler, Moyd could draw the most extensive playing time of his career on Sunday during the season opener against Colorado State.

All of which begs the question: "Where have you been all this time?"

"That's OK," Moyd said Wednesday. "Everything happens for a reason. Everything happens in due time. Now I have an opportunity and I'm going to take advantage."

Everything seemed to click this summer for the 5-foot-7, 185-pounder from Miami, Fla. The progress showed by Moyd will allow freshman tailback Ray Polk to redshirt this season, CU running backs coach Darian Hagan said. Hagan expects that Sumler, Moyd and freshmen Darrell Scott and Rodney "Speedy" Stewart will all draw carries against CSU.

"If that's what the coaches want, that will work," Moyd said. "I think there are enough opportunities to share. I'm hoping that all of us do well."

Relegated mostly to special teams in the past, Moyd said he never entertained thoughts of transferring.

"I have support from my family and friends," Moyd explained. "With that support base, I can get through a lot of things."

"A lot of guys come in thinking they are going to the NFL. I came here first to get an education. That's going real well."

Moyd is scheduled to receive degrees next May in the double major of accounting and business management. Someday, he would like to open his own business as an entrepreneur.

As for football, Sumler said Moyd "seemed to be taking everything more seriously this year."

Said Moyd: "I'm just more focusing on every little detail that I need to do. It was maturity. And also I saw an opportunity this year."

"I've just kind of been waiting my turn. This is my turn now. It's time for me to step up."

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terry frei

## Big game belongs on campus

By Terry Frei  
The Denver Post

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BOULDER — On the second day of fall classes at the University of Colorado, or less than a week before the opening of the Buffaloes' 2008 football season against Colorado State in Denver, several students among the hundreds walking across campus actually were *not* talking on cellphones.

At the Alferd Packer Grill in the University Memorial Center, freshmen were being told that at least until they were finished with lunch, they shouldn't ask too many questions about what ol' Alferd did to deserve the naming honor.

At Folsom Field, sprinklers sprayed across the unlined grass.

Across Broadway, on the Hill, the bars, bagel shops and other establishments welcomed the return of most of the student community from the summer break.

This is where CU's designated home games against Colorado State belong.

Boulder.

It's more than Folsom. It's the atmosphere, the feel

of the campus and the college town, and alumni tailgating in the campus lots and cringing at the memory of that biopsychology class in Muenzinger Auditorium.

The setting is energizing, even for new Coloradans who didn't attend CU, but are open-minded enough to back up their talk about how much they love college football by sampling the Folsom experience and making the Buffs their second-favorite team — behind the school mentioned on their diploma.

When CU athletic director Mike Bohn recently hinted that the Buffs' 2009 home game in the rivalry would be at Folsom, and not Invesco Field, he should have been applauded, not derided. Bohn's cited reason, ensuring that the Buffaloes have at least six home-stadium games in 2009, in line with the rest of the Big 12, was sound, but unnecessary.

College football is the college town atmosphere. I'm aware of the rivalry exceptions. The World's Largest Cocktail Party (Georgia vs. Florida) in Jacksonville. The Red River Shootout (Texas vs. Oklahoma) in Dallas. Those are entrenched traditions, and none of the schools involved needs to be conscious of taking measures to fill its stadium for the rest of the home dates.

I attended an Auburn-Alabama "Iron Bowl" in Birmingham before the annual game returned to the campuses in 1999. That's the hint CU and CSU should take, more so than noticing that some athletic departments, including in the Big 12, are selling out and moving nonrivalry home games to neutral sites for major paydays.

CSU officials should realize that one way to bring fans back to (or to, period) Hughes Stadium in Fort Collins would be to make the in-state rivalry a home-and-home series. Athletic director Paul Kowalczyk and president Larry Penley should be

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most concerned with the long-term benefits of selling Hughes Stadium as the place to go on Saturdays in the fall, even though the pitch would have a better chance of succeeding if it were on campus, rather than miles to the west.

After Sunday, the next CSU "home" game in the rivalry won't be until 2010, the final year in the existing contract, and it should be in Fort Collins — as should all CSU home games in any new deal with CU. The financial sacrifice would be worth the long-term advantage.

Both schools have other home dates to try to hook fans and turn their programs into those where the tickets are on eBay for considerably marked-up prices. Yet part of the charm should be getting both constituencies to the other college towns — even if the number of tickets available to the general public and

## Blog

- Visit Terry Frei's blog on All Things Colorado Sports

visiting team fans becomes scarce. That's part of the allure.

The Invesco date as a sampler for move-ins hasn't worked; those folks still are heading to LoDo bars to watch their schools' games on television, and it's one of the many reasons the Rocky Mountain Showdown isn't an automatic sellout in Denver. The schools have a better shot of luring them as secondary fans if they can think of Hughes or Folsom and the college-town settings as at least a bit reminiscent of Ann Arbor, Columbus, Eugene, Tuscaloosa, Athens and (fill in the blank).

"I'm good either way," CU coach Dan Hawkins said after the Buffs' Tuesday practice. "I see positives to either side, I really do. I kind of sit on the fence. Plus, I'm also one of those guys who, hey, if they tell you to play out in a farm field, that's where you play."

Hawkins' stance is understandable and sincere, and he went on to list the pros of playing the game in either place.

I fell off that fence long ago. If the series becomes home-and-home either in the remaining two years of the CU-CSU contract, or under a new deal, it would be a smart move for both schools.

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Longmont, Colorado  
Thursday, August 28, 2008

**TIMES-CALL**

Publish Date: 8/28/2008

## Returns up next for WR

Bufs' Smith eager to tackle new duties

*By Patrick Ridgell*

*Longmont Times-Call*

BOULDER — Josh Smith wants the football.

Colorado lists Smith, a sophomore receiver, as its top punt and kickoff returner entering Sunday's season opener with Colorado State.

Smith said he's raring to go, yet admits he has never done either in a college game.

Problem? Not really, because the more he touches the ball, he said, the better.

"The more opportunities I have with the ball in my hands, I feel like I get more relaxed and I get more of a feel of the game, and that helps to slow it down a lot faster for me," Smith said. "When I take hits early, I'm pretty much numb.

"When I'm running around and blocking but not getting the ball as much, I feel like I'm in the game, but not really in the game."

Last year, two seniors manned the jobs for CU: Chase McBride took most of the punts, while Terrence Wheatley averaged 24.8 per kickoff return. Redshirt freshman Jason Espinoza played well returning punts in spring but broke a collarbone in August camp.

Smith joked that he's "going to try my best to hold it down for him."

Whether CU makes good Sunday on its dedication in camp to blocking punts could render Smith's role returning them meaningless. Assuming he gets some chances, he offers high reward. As head coach Dan Hawkins said after Smith broke a punt and kick return in the second scrimmage, "He's obviously electric."

He is one of the fastest players on the team, and possibly its most athletic, making him a tantalizing choice. But inexperience is something he'll have to deal with Sunday when the Rams bear down on him while a punt hangs in the air.

When he fields them, Smith said, he keeps in his head a "real aggressive song," one that serves not only to fire him up but also to distract him from negative thoughts.

"Basically, that just keeps my attention off of what's really happening," he said.

Any advice from Hawkins will sound something like this:

"We always tell them the same thing: Play hard play and smart and have fun," Hawkins said about CU's returners. "We want them to relax to some degree and calm down.

"Things are going to happen. They are. That's the nature of football and the nature of life. You have to work through



CU sophomore Josh Smith is slated to return punts and kickoffs for the first time in his collegiate career Sunday evening when the Buffs take on Colorado State in Denver.

**Joshua Buck/Times-Call**

that and think positive thoughts. When bad things happen, you put it behind you and move on.”

Smith started playing organized football less than four years ago, when he was a junior in high school, so much of what he does is new. His teammates realize this.

“The guy ... was really, really raw at first,” quarterback Cody Hawkins said. “And he’s still kind of getting there. A lot of people don’t realize this is going to be his fourth year playing football.

“But just watching the kid run around from the first day he was here, he was very impressive with the ball in his hands. He wasn’t always running the right way, but he was making guys miss, and he was making a lot of plays.”

**FAMILIAR FACE:** Buffs senior safety Joel Adams grew up with Ben DeLine in Steamboat Springs. DeLine is the true freshman kicker CSU is using to replace the injured Jason Smith on Sunday.

“I’ve seen him in games. He has a big leg,” Adams said. “I’m excited for him. “He’s a good kicker and a real nice kid.”

**EXTRA POINTS:** Asked about CSU’s rushing game in last year’s game, Dan Hawkins said, “They pounded it on us. Pounded it.” CSU ran the ball 56 times for 157 yards in CU’s 31-28 overtime victory. Kyle Bell had 40 carries for 135 yards. “(CSU) Coach (Steve) Fairchild has been around for a while,” Hawkins said. “I’m sure he’ll try to get that running game going.” ... Hawkins said his team is physically and mentally ready to play.

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