



# Game in Hansen's blood, too

## True freshman QB, Cody Hawkins share football pedigree

By Kyle Ringo

Monday, October 20, 2008

The sons of two football coaches sat together in a room in the Dal Ward Center each day last week for at least an hour with a laser pen and more film than they could study.

One served as tutor. The other was the student.

Sophomore Cody Hawkins taught defensive formations used by Kansas State. He covered the Wildcats' tendencies on third downs and tried to point out little tips such as a defensive end shading his stance, tipping off a coverage.

True freshman Tyler Hansen soaked it all in knowing he would be on the field for the first time in his college career against the Wildcats. The Buffs needed him to shake up a limp attack.

Hansen, a product of Temecula, Calif., debuted Saturday and helped the Buffs snap a three-game losing streak. His rushing ability proved particularly effective at keeping an ill-prepared defense off balance. He ran for 88 yards in the game and threw a touchdown pass.

Hansen had Kansas State coaches and players scratching their heads trying to figure out ways to stop him. Afterward Hansen credited Hawkins for helping to prepare him. He said those hour-long film sessions let him know he and Hawkins could co-exist because they both want to win first and foremost.

"I know it seems like most people would be uncomfortable with that, but me and Cody absolutely accept it," Hansen said. "We're really good friends and we just want to help our team win." "If that's me playing and him playing every other play, then we'll do that."

Whether Hansen takes over the job completely or continues to split time with Cody Hawkins will be decided in the coming weeks. Coach Dan Hawkins said both will play again this week at No. 16 Missouri and who starts is of little concern to anyone on the team.

"This is not an issue," Dan Hawkins said after Sunday's evening practice. "It would only be an issue if you guys make it an issue and you pound it. It's a total non-issue.

"Those guys are good with whatever it takes to win, and we're going to play whoever it takes to win."

Plenty of people will be doing their homework around the Big 12 Conference this week, hoping to find out more information on Hansen. Who is he and what are his capabilities?

Tommy Leach, his high school coach the past two years back home in Southern California, says this is

all anyone needs to know: "He's the ultimate team guy."

Leach watched Hansen make remarkable plays during the two years he coached him at Chaparral High School. Hansen led his team to a state championship game in his junior season and ended up playing three quarters of that game with broken wrist.

When coaches completely changed the offense prior to his senior season, he didn't complain and buckled down to learn what he needed to know.

"He wants to please, that's the biggest thing," Leach said. "He wants to make the coaches proud. He wants to make his teammates proud. He wants to make his family proud. That's how he is. He's not only a pleaser. He's super-duper humble. "

Leach and his assistant coaches were baffled when college coaches failed to recruit Hansen. The only other offer Hansen received other than the one that came from CU coach Dan Hawkins was from Idaho State.

Leach said some coaches began recruiting Hansen only after he committed to CU. Many of them warned Hansen that going to Colorado was a mistake because he would be sitting behind the head coach's son for three years.

Leach said he knew better and advised his quarterback to stick with his commitment. He said the Hawkins family is a football family just like the Hansen family and he knew coach Hawkins would play the best player, even if it wasn't his son Cody.

That prediction came true against the Wildcats.

Hansen is the son of two former standout athletes at San Diego State. His father, Rick, played quarterback for the Aztecs (1978-1983) and his mother was an All-American sprinter and hurdler.

Rick Hansen joked Sunday that his youngest son got his running ability from his mother and his arm strength and understanding of the game from dad, who has been a high school coach since 1983.

Rick Hansen was able to fly to Colorado and watch his son's first college game. Afterward they went to the Pearl Street Mall for pizza and a father-son talk about the victory, handling expectations, preparation and everything else that will now be heaped on his Tyler, including sharing playing time with Cody Hawkins.

"We talked about the speed of the game and how the game changes a little bit, but then you realize it really doesn't change a lot," Rick Hansen said.

Rick Hansen said he is Cody Hawkins's biggest fan when he's on the field.

He has been through quarterback battles as a player and coach and late in Saturday's game when Cody Hawkins was called on in crunch time and Tyler Hansen was watching from the sidelines, Rick Hansen told fans sitting around him that it was the right decision.

He explained that it made perfect sense for Cody Hawkins to be in the game because as the veteran player, he had probably taken almost all the snaps in two-minute drills in practice all week.

Tyler Hansen grew up in the locker rooms of the teams his father coached. He was a sports fanatic, playing competitive soccer as youngster. His mother sometimes scolded him for putting marks on the ceiling in the family home tossing the football up and down dreaming of days to come.

New York Yankees posters of Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, Mickey Mantel and Joe DiMaggio adorned the walls of his bedroom, though he considers himself a San Francisco Giants fan.

He began playing quarterback two years before high school and modeled his game after Brett Favre and Drew Brees, which is why he wears No. 9.

Rick Hansen said his son always had a strong arm from the time he was a young boy playing catch in the front yard. He first began to believe his son could play at a high level when he attended a prestigious quarterback camp and was quickly moved from the "B" group to one that included well-known prospects such as Dayne Crist, Jimmy Clausen and others.

"He made every throw better than most of those guys from what I saw in my opinion," Rick Hansen said. "Of course you have blinders on with your kid, but I saw some pretty good stuff."

It's the stuff CU coaches have seen recently in practice and what fans will be seeing more and more of in the coming weeks.



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# Rocky Mountain News

## CU report: Hansen debut 'not bad'

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

Published October 19, 2008 at 9:31 p.m.

**BOULDER** — Offensive coordinator/quarterbacks coach **Mark Helfrich** on Sunday said freshman quarterback **Tyler Hansen** scored "a solid not bad" for his debut Saturday night against Kansas State.

Hansen accounted for 157 yards of total offense (86 rushing, 71 passing) and a touchdown pass in CU's 14-13 Big 12 Conference win.

Helfrich and coach **Dan Hawkins** said Hansen and **Cody Hawkins** likely will be used on demand once again when the Buffaloes play Saturday at No. 16 Missouri.

"As of now, both will definitely play," Helfrich said. "Tyler brings us an element (running) we haven't had at that position this year. We'll see where our plan takes us, where Missouri takes us" as a game plan is formulated.

Hansen's most noticeable errors, besides a first-carry fumble, said Helfrich, were in misreads and miscommunication. "But he's a guy who will do nothing but get better," Helfrich added.

Dan Hawkins said whoever starts "is not an issue" unless it is made into one. "We'll play whoever it takes to win."

Nonetheless, the CU coach said he remains a staunch opponent of a two-quarterback system: "There's lot of things in life you have to do and don't like it. We'll do what's best given that situation."

### CONFIDENCE GROWS

Hansen said the success of his first game action gave him "a big-time confidence boost," but there is plenty of room for improvement - starting with "bursting out of my fakes more" and in his passing.

He completed half of his 14 passing attempts, including a nicely thrown 21-yard touchdown pass to **Scotty McKnight**. But he also threw an interception.

Despite spending the season's first five weeks learning opponents' offenses instead of his own while running CU's scout team, Hansen said his grasp of the Buffs playbook is adequate, adding, "I'm doing better with it."

He also knows the element of surprise he enjoyed against Kansas State won't be there against Missouri. "And I've definitely got to prepare a lot better because of that," he said.

### FIRST OFFENSE

**Eugene Goree**, signed in 2007 as a defensive lineman, saw his first game action on offense Saturday night. Aside from a "couple of bumps in the road," he believed his debut at right guard was satisfactory.

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"It's a lot of the same concept and technique (as defense)," Goree claimed, adding he still believes his permanent spot will be on defense when current seniors **George Hypolite** and **Brandon Nicolas** graduate.

"proud" of how his entire quarterback corps handled last week's change.

## NO KICKING CHANGE

Dan Hawkins indicated there would be no change in placekickers, though **Aric Goodman** has missed his past six field-goal attempts, including one attempt that was blocked by Kansas State.

Hawkins said kickoff specialist **Jameson Davis** still is scheduled for postseason arthroscopic knee surgery and continues to have occasional problems with his plant (right) leg while kicking off.

## MAKING THE SACRIFICE

As the Buffs prepared for Kansas State, **Matt Ballenger** - because of his size - found himself playing the role of Wildcats quarterback **Josh Freeman** with CU's scout team.

He's close, but he's no Freeman. At 6-foot-4, 230 pounds, Ballenger is CU's biggest quarterback. Freeman is 6-6, 250.

Dan Hawkins called it "a huge sacrifice" for Ballenger to shift to the scout team, but also said it exemplified what went on at the quarterback position last week.

Helfrich said he viewed Ballenger as "second/third" on the depth chart, adding he was

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Publish Date: 10/20/2008

## New face at QB opens options for CU offense

By Patrick Ridgell  
Longmont Times-Call

BOULDER — The Colorado football program unveiled a brand new dimension in Saturday's 14-13 defeat of Kansas State. It used freshman quarterback Tyler Hansen's mobility and the element of surprise to eke out just enough offense and snap a three-game losing streak.

The question today is: Now what?

CU plays at No. 16 Missouri on Saturday (4:30 p.m., FSN) and it won't surprise anyone, especially the Tigers, when Hansen plays. Offensive coordinator Mark Helfrich said Sunday that the team's plan is to continue to play both Hansen and Cody Hawkins, who has started each of CU's seven games, as he did against Kansas State. Helfrich said game planning will dictate how many snaps each will receive. There was no final word on who'll start, though Hansen said that coming off the bench Saturday helped calm his nerves before he entered on the third series.

Head coach Dan Hawkins has said in the past that he prefers to stick with one quarterback, but Hawkins conceded Sunday that sometimes you have to do things you don't want to. Hawkins and Helfrich praised all of the quarterbacks, including senior Nick Nelson and redshirt freshman Matt Ballenger, for setting aside their own agendas and doing what's best for the team.

When the first question following Sunday night's practice was about the quarterback situation, Hawkins balked.

"This is not an issue," he told reporters. "It would only be an issue if you guys make it an issue and pound it into an issue. It is a total non-issue."

"Those guys are good with whatever it takes to win, and we're going to play whoever it takes to win. If you guys continue to pound on it, it will become an issue."

"We haven't decided, we haven't done anything yet. We're going to continue to play whoever we have to play to try to win the ball game."

To win, CU will have to generate more offense. Its two touchdowns in the second quarter Saturday proved to be enough to beat Kansas State. But the Buffs, who totaled 353 yards Saturday on the Big 12's worst

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Colorado quarterback Tyler Hansen, front left, runs for a long gain past Kansas State linebacker Reggie Walker, back, and defensive end Ian Campbell in the second quarter in Boulder on Saturday. David Zalubowski/AP

### First look

A quick glimpse at CU's next opponent:

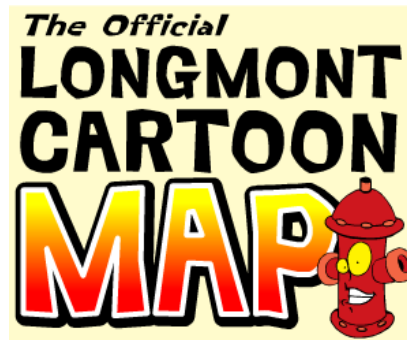
**Who:** No. 16 Missouri (5-2, 1-2 Big 12)

**Where:** Columbia, Mo., Memorial Stadium/ Faurot Field

**When:** Saturday, 4:30 p.m., FSN

**Notes:** Missouri has beaten CU two years in a row, including 55-10 last November in Folsom Field. ... The Tigers have lost two straight, including a 56-31 pounding Saturday at Texas in which Longhorns fans taunted Missouri with chants of "Over-rated!" Missouri trailed, 35-3, at halftime. ... Las Vegas oddsmakers put the Buffs as 20-point underdogs Sunday. ... Missouri quarterback Chase Daniel is second in the Big 12 with 342.5 passing yards a game, and fourth in passing efficiency.

patrick ridgell



### Call of the day

All the California transplants here in Colorado know it's Santa Ana winds. Santana is a band.

10.17.08

I would just like to say Nov. 5 will be a great day, with no more campaigning of either candidate for any elected office.



statistical defense, have yet to generate more than 400 in a 2008 game. They haven't exceeded 21 points since the second game of the season. CU remains last in the Big 12 in scoring, rushing yards, passing yards and total offense.

Playing the mobile Hansen, as Helfrich said, provides an element at quarterback the team hasn't had in 2008. It also limits the plays Helfrich can call — because Hansen's playbook knowledge doesn't match Cody Hawkins'. Hansen said his grasp of the playbook is "doing better"; however, he added that, since camp ended, he's spent most of his time running the opponents' offenses as the scout team quarterback and fewer hours learning CU's.

Hansen called making the abrupt switch last week "a lot different."

"Certainly Tyler's repertoire is not as wide as Cody's, but we can make up for that in different ways, whether it's formations or motions or little nuances here and there," Helfrich said.

On a third-and-7 late in the third quarter, with Hansen quarterbacking, Helfrich called a run for Darrell Scott that lost a yard. Hansen said there'll "definitely" be a few more passing plays in the plan for him at Missouri.

"Coach Helfrich said he's just trying to build my confidence and make me more experienced, try and fill out more of the playbook," Hansen said.

**EXTRA POINTS:** Hansen said his phone was "ringing off the hook" Sunday after his debut. ... Dan Hawkins reiterated that kickoff specialist Jameson Davis needs his left knee — his plant knee — scoped after the season. Hawkins said that doesn't mean Davis won't get a shot at placekicking, but added that Davis' left knee bothers him on kickoffs. Placekicker Aric Goodman missed a field goal and had another blocked Saturday, to fall to 3-for-10 in 2008. ... Hawkins reported no new injuries. ... Missouri was blown out Saturday at Texas, 56-31, for its second loss in a row. Hawkins said he still voted Missouri high in his top 25 Sunday. "Texas is in a zone ... they're a very dangerous team," Hawkins said.

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