



Goodman still Buffs' FG kicker

By Kyle Ringo

Wednesday, October 22, 2008

Something dramatic might have to happen for anyone else to attempt a field goal this season for the Colorado football team.

The fact that sophomore Aric Goodman's last six attempts have been blocked or have sailed wide is not dramatic enough.

Freshman Jameson Davis is able to serve as the kickoff specialist, and has done a solid job in that role, despite needing surgery to repair damage to the knee on his plant (left) leg. Davis has not trotted out to attempt a field goal because it is too painful.

Davis says when kicking off, his momentum carries him through the ball. A field goal or extra point requires torque on the plant leg.

Special teams coach Kent Riddle said he has been working on trying to help Goodman build some confidence. He tries to put his kicker in pressure-packed situations in practice, but practice hasn't been the problem.

Riddle and coach Dan Hawkins said Goodman has hit a very high percentage of his practice kicks all season.

"Fundamentally and technically, he's a pretty good kicker," Riddle said. "There is not a major technical flaw. He's missing it a little bit because he's battling some confidence issues."

Goodman said he has never experienced a stretch in which he missed so many consecutive field goals. He said it has taught him about never getting too high or too low no matter the situation.

"It kind of sends you back down to the bottom and shows you how everything can be," Goodman said. "It kind of makes you a little bit more humble about everything. It's a learning experience and I'm just trying to get out of it."

Colorado could have used a field goal late in last week's game against Kansas State. Nursing a one-point lead with 1 minute left in the game, coaches decided to go for it on fourth down rather than sending Goodman on the field to attempt what would have been a 47-yard field goal.

Goodman said he didn't read anything into the decision because he expected coaches to go for it and use as much of the clock as possible.

"I know coach Hawk has the confidence in me that we needed a field goal he would have sent me out there," Goodman said.

Funky punts

When Missouri punts, something it hasn't had to do much this season, it asks its punters to roll out with the football first and kick a line drive that will bounce and give return men fits.

The strategy has worked well so far. The Tigers are 32nd in the nation with a 37-yard net average per punt. The tactic also creates the possibility of the ball hitting a member of the punt return team and a Missouri recovery.

Riddle said CU returner Josh Smith must take responsibility for seeing each kick and letting teammates know where the ball is this week more than most.

"He's the only guy who is going to see the punt, so he's got to make sure he gets up there and helps guys out, just screaming," Riddle said.

Coach Dan Hawkins said the approach has been effective for Missouri. He was asked if it is something he would consider adopting in the future.

"You know me, I could adopt anything," Hawkins said. "It's hard to block. It's hard to catch. It's hard to set up a return."

Official position

Hawkins smiled after Wednesday's practice when asked for his view on what really happened when an official appeared to tackle the South Carolina quarterback last week during the South Carolina-LSU game.

Film shows the official throwing his elbow in the player as the two collided on the field.

"I think he had a flashback and he jacked him," Hawkins said. "It was interesting. That's for sure."

Notable

CU running back Rodney Stewart ranks third in the nation among freshmen in rushing with 594 yards. He is 40th overall. ... The Buffs practiced for the first time Wednesday evening in the bubble. The CU grounds crew will finish the installation this week. ... Hawkins said he does not expect Ben Burney to begin practicing with the team until spring. Burney is redshirting this season and has undergone five surgeries on shoulders, knees and a wrist since the end of last season. ... Former CU offensive lineman Brian Daniels visited practice Wednesday. His brother, Shawn, is a redshirt freshman guard this season.



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Bufs aim for more than snowball's chance

Mizzou last year buried CU with 48 straight points

By Kyle Ringo

Wednesday, October 22, 2008

Temperatures are supposed to be in the mid-50s at kickoff Saturday evening in Columbia, Mo., but the Colorado Buffaloes will be trying to avoid the snowball effect.

They've been victims before.

A year ago Missouri came to Boulder and buried the Buffs 55-10 in an avalanche of 48 unanswered points. It was the third-worst home loss in CU history.

Missouri scored 41 of those points during a 29-minute span in the second and third quarters to finish the Buffs, who seemed to completely come apart once the carnage began. Nearly a year later, CU is still searching for answers.

Coach Dan Hawkins was asked about slowing down Missouri's offense this week and his first reaction was a laugh.

"Can you do that?" Hawkins said. "I don't think you can do it."

Watching film of that game, and other Missouri blowouts, has been a horror show for the CU defense, which must find a way to contain the nation's leading scorer in tailback Derrick Washington, the second-ranked all-purpose yardage man in the nation in wide receiver Jeremy Maclin, one of the best tight ends ever to play college football in Chase Coffman and quarterback Chase Daniel, who finished fourth in the Heisman Trophy balloting a year ago.

"Can they be stopped?" senior captain Ryan Walters asked. "I don't think they can be just outright stopped. I think they can be contained. Obviously, it's a team that is beatable because two teams have beat them.

"We can't come out with the deer-in-the-headlights look."

Walters doesn't remember much of last season's debacle. He was carted off the field and taken to a hospital after being knocked out.

CU defensive tackle Brandon Nicolas said he is as impressed with the Tigers as any team he has seen on film. Nicolas and the Buffs already have faced Texas, the nation's No. 1 team, this season. Florida State, West Virginia, Kansas and Kansas State aren't bad offensively either.

Nicolas and the Buffs surrendered 598 total yards of offense to the Tigers last season. It was the first

time in more than four years the Buffs had allowed an opponent to chew up more than 500 yards.

Missouri comes into its homecoming weekend this year with a two-game losing streak but still ranked fifth in the nation in scoring offense and total offense.

"We let them run the ball for one, and that opened up their passing game," Nicolas said. They can run the ball or throw the ball either way, but this year it seems like they focus on the pass."

Missouri is ranked fourth in the nation in passing, avering 369 yards a game and a 74-percent completion rate. During one stretch earlier this season, Daniel threw just 13 incompletions over a three-game span.

The Buffs are No. 1 in the Big 12 Conference in pass defense and have allowed only five passing touchdowns this season. They gave up five touchdown passes in last year's Missouri game alone, with three of them going to Coffman.

"We've got some things that we think will be good against them," linebacker Jeff Smart said. "Coming off our game against Kansas State, one of the top scoring offenses in the country, I think we did pretty good against them keeping them out of the end zone most of the game.

"We have to definitely limit big plays and keep them from establishing a running game."



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THE DENVER POST

colorado football

CU's man of mystery steps into feature role

Bufs RB Rodney Stewart eyes a school record as he leads Colorado with 594 yards.

By Chris Dempsey
The Denver Post

Article Last Updated: 10/22/2008 11:28:59 PM MDT



Rodney Stewart is racking up the yards after Colorado installed plays designed just for him. (Kathryn Scott Osler, The Denver Post)

BOULDER — It's seven games into his first season as a college football player and Colorado running back Rodney Stewart still has to pinch himself.

Despite not being recruited heavily and signing with a team that also landed the top prep running back prospect in the nation, Stewart has shined. He has become CU's feature back and is one 100-yard performance from setting the CU record for 100-yard games by a freshman. He has three.

Stewart admits he's just as surprised at what's transpired as those who hadn't heard about him.

"I'm definitely blessed and definitely living my dream," Stewart said. "Honestly, I didn't know what was going to happen. I didn't want to hope for nothing too good and get let down, and I didn't want to hope for nothing less and get more than what I hoped for."

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Not only do Stewart's 594 rushing yards lead the Buffs, they rank second in the Big 12 behind Oklahoma State's Kendall Hunter.

Before the season, the 5-foot-6, 175-pound Stewart said he "had no clue" how much he would be used, if at all.

"I thought I was third string or something like that," he said.

But when Stewart-specific plays started popping up in the playbook, he said he realized he would get major playing time.

"I knew I was going to get a shot when they started putting plays in the playbook designed for me,"

Stewart said. "Like the second game of the season, there was this little reverse play where they gave it to me two times and I got yards out of it. After that, I knew I was going to play a little bit more."

At his current rate of 84.9 yards per game, Stewart could run for more than 1,000 yards, which would break CU's record for most rushing yards by a freshman (830 by Lamont Warren, 1981).

Saturday, when the Buffs travel to Columbia, Mo., to face No. 16 Missouri, Stewart will have about 20 family members watching from the stands. They're making the trip from his hometown in Westerville, Ohio, to see him play in person.

Footnotes.

Colorado practiced in the "bubble" for the first time this season on Wednesday. Hawkins said the practice went well, but reiterated the need for a bigger, permanent facility. . . . Safety Benjamin Burney (shoulder) will not be with the team until spring practice, Hawkins said. . . . Hawkins, on the SEC referee who leveled South Carolina quarterback Stephen Garcia. "I think he had a flashback and he jacked him," Hawkins said, laughing. "I don't know. It's interesting, that's for sure."

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Rocky Mountain News

CU report: Freshman Stewart eyes 1,000-yard mark

By **Paul Willis**, Rocky Mountain News ([Contact](#))

Published October 22, 2008 at 8:02 p.m.

Updated October 23, 2008 at 12:53 p.m.



Photo by Associated Press

Associated Press

Rodney Stewart says 1,000 yards is "definitely" a goal.

Rodney Stewart has elevated his goals.

Initially, the diminutive CU running back craved only to get on the field this season. After winning the primary ball-carrier job after the third game of the season, Stewart has rocketed his way to fourth on the Buffaloes' all-time freshman rushing yardage list with 594.

If the 5-foot-6 speedster remains healthy, he

seems a cinch to break **Lamont Warren's** freshman record of 830 yards, but Stewart is looking beyond that.

"Definitely, 1,000 yards is a goal," Stewart said. "Earlier in the season, it was 600; I didn't think I was going to play that much. Now it's 1,000, and if I get to 1,000, I'll set a goal higher than that."

He said it

"Darrell's cool. We don't talk about playing time or anything like that. When we play video games, we'll talk stuff."

Stewart, on fellow freshman running back **Darrell Scott**, who was projected as the marquee recruit but now is serving as Stewart's backup

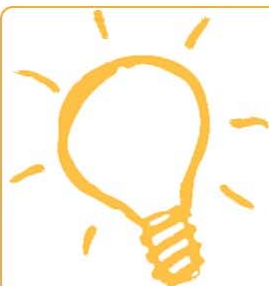
Finding back of end zone

CU kickoff specialist **Jameson Davis** has a lofty 44.4 percent touchback percentage, a mark approaching the best in Football Bowl Subdivision (formerly Division I-A).

Last season, Nebraska's **Adi Kunalic** led FBS with a 42.4 percent touchback rate and is converting at a slightly better rate than Davis this season (45.2). For a hint of how proficient these kickers have been, last season a 28.9 percentage was good for 10th best in FBS.

"In the preseason, that's about what I was doing, about 45 percent for touchbacks," Davis said. "That's about where I expect it to be. There's a few that I got under with the wind behind me, so

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Rocky Mountain News

I know if I'd connected with those, they'd be out of the end zone, too."

Some CU fans have wondered why Davis hasn't gotten a chance at placekicker with the struggles of **Aric Goodman**. Coach **Dan Hawkins** said Davis' troubles with his left (plant) leg, on which he'll have surgery in the offseason, have taken him out of consideration.

"I could do it if they wanted me to," Davis said. "It's just if I keep kicking a lot of kicks throughout the day every day, excessively, that's when my knee starts to swell up and hurt. . . . But for a game, yeah definitely."

Numbers game

is the number worn by safety **D.J. Dykes** and newly promoted co-quarterback **Tyler Hansen**. College teams can have duplicate numbers as long as the players never are on the field at the same time.

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Publish Date: 10/23/2008

CU's Hansen, Stewart proving worth

By Patrick Ridgell
Longmont Times-Call

BOULDER — So, obviously, we all knew last February that Rodney Stewart and Tyler Hansen would be playing key roles in Colorado's backfield the week the Buffs played Missouri. Right, coach?

"You sign them for a reason, and you think maybe this guy will redshirt, or this guy will play, but you never really know," CU coach Dan Hawkins said.

Stewart, the Big 12's second-leading rusher, and Hansen, who'll share snaps at quarterback Saturday when CU visits Missouri (4:30 p.m., FSN), were far from the most hyped members of CU's 2008 recruiting class. Neither had an offer from another BCS school. Neither received more than two or three stars from recruiting analysts.

Hawkins doesn't mind, and isn't surprised.

"We tell all the recruits, people promise them they're going to play, promise them they're going to start. There's no way you can do that," he said.

"You just say we're going to be open to it and be mentally, physically and emotionally ready to go and if the opportunity presents itself, you use them."

According to Rivals.com, CU has two quarterback commitments among its five. Hawkins said he does not expect playing Hansen, a true freshman, will give pause to either one.

"There's always going to be people coming," Hawkins said. "To some degree it gives them more credence, because you're going to play the best guy.

"We're very honest with them when we look at depth charts and all of that. It's not always the oldest guys who play; it's the best guys who play. You're always going to have to compete against the other guys. I don't want somebody that doesn't want to compete against somebody else."

Other Buffs, like linebacker Jon Major and offensive tackle Bryce Givens, freshmen who were ranked higher, also said

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Colorado tailback Rodney Stewart is stopped by the Texas defense in the second quarter at Folsom Field in Boulder on Oct. 4. **Joshua**

Buck/Times-Call

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Call of the day

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10.20.08

Just don't argue with me, buy American. I don't care what it is.

they aren't surprised Stewart and Hansen have ascended to key roles.

"It's like a hidden gem thing," Major said. "It shows you how well these coaches can evaluate players and recruit. You don't just recruit for skill; you recruit for potential. That's probably a huge thing."

Said Givens: "I've always known from the get-go that whole ... star process with recruiting classes is all just a bunch of bull. It definitely has some value, but I'd say not much."

Stewart, averaging 84.9 yards a game and 4.9 a carry, already has the program's fourth-best rushing season for a freshman. He's at 594 yards. Lamont Warren's 830 in 1991 is the freshman record.

BUBBLE UP: The team started Wednesday's work outdoors, but moved into the bubble for the conclusion of practice. It took 90 minutes Tuesday night to inflate the bubble, after all the pieces had been assembled over recent days.

CU practiced Tuesday in rain and dark, so most coaches and players were eager to move indoors.

"I love the bubble; that wind was killing me," guard Devin Head said.

Hawkins continued to push to upgrade facilities.

"Seriously, long term, we need a permanent facility, that you can get a full field in that you can film a wide shot and an end zone shot," Hawkins said.

EXTRA POINTS: Former CU offensive lineman Brian Daniels addressed the team after practice. ... Offensive line coach Jeff Grimes said Eugene Goree has returned to the defensive line for now. Goree played a couple of series at guard Saturday against Kansas State. Grimes said the first tackle off the bench would be Ethan Adkins. Left tackle Nate Solder graded out to 99 percent for his work against Kansas State. "And I'm a tough grader," Grimes said.

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

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