



Buff OL Tuioti-Mariner tears ACL

By Kyle Ringo

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BOULDER, Colo. — Colorado freshman offensive lineman Max Tuioti-Mariner will miss spring practices after suffering a torn anterior cruciate ligament in workouts Tuesday, coach Dan Hawkins said.

It is the third ACL injury he has suffered in the past two years.

Tuioti-Mariner played in three games for the Buffs as a true freshman last season before suffering a torn ACL in practices leading up to the Florida State game at the end of September.

He was expected back on a limited basis in spring drills, which begin March 31, but now will be out until fall camp in August at least.

“It’s a tough blow, he had to go through this with the other (knee) and now this one again,” Hawkins said in a statement. “Eric McCarty (team physician) examined him tonight, and told us surgery will be in the near future once the swelling goes down. But his teammates are loving him up, we’re loving him up, and he’s generally a very positive person to begin with. We’re encouraged that we will be able to get him back for the season.”

Tuioti-Mariner, a product of Corona, Calif., was one of the most highly recruited offensive linemen in the West heading into his senior season in high school, but he suffered his first torn ACL in spring practices in 2007 and missed the entire season.

Some schools backed off and he ultimately chose to come to Boulder. The NCAA has already given Tuioti-Mariner and fellow offensive lineman Ryan Miller medical redshirt seasons for last year meaning they will enter the 2009 season with the same number of years of eligibility remaining as they had at the start of the 2008 campaign. Miller is a sophomore.

CU has a total of 20 players coming off some sort of serious injury or surgery in 2008, and eight of them are expected to be limited in spring drills, which were moved back to April to allow maximum healing time.

Four players, Tuioti-Mariner, place-kicker Jameson Davis, safety Ray Polk and tight end Luke Walters will be held out of spring entirely.

Ten players have had surgery in the three months since the 2008 season ended.



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